

Caring for Someone with Dementia: How Occupational Therapy Can Help

What is Occupational Therapy?



Occupational Therapy (OT) is all about helping people do the things that are important “meaningful” to them—whether it's getting dressed, cooking, or spending time with family.

- As dementia gets worse, adults need more help from a care partner. They may need help with things like bathing, cooking, handling money, shopping, and driving.
- Over time, caring for someone with dementia can become stressful, and the care partner's health and happiness may suffer.
- It's important for care partners to have support and resources to help them with their role.

Care Partners

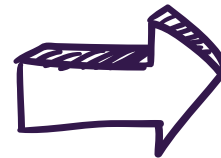
- a person who works with the person to help improve their quality of life.
- Care partners can be family members, friends, or health professionals.

OT and Dementia>>>

- OT supports both the person with dementia and the care partner
- Focuses on what a person can still do and finds ways to make daily tasks easier
- OT also help care partners learn safe ways to assist their loved ones while protecting their own health.
- With the right support, care partners can continue providing safe and loving care for their family members.

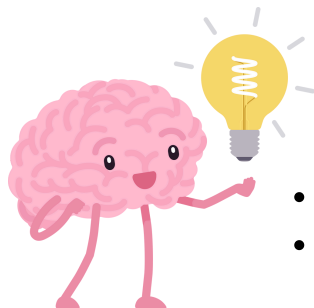


Ways OT Supports You & Your Loved One



Understanding Abilities with Assessments

- OTs use tools like the Allen Cognitive Level Screen (ACLS) to check thinking and memory skills.
- They identify what tasks a person can still do, what needs to be adapted, and where they need help.



Making the Home Safer

- OTs do home modifications
- Simple changes at home can reduce confusion and keep your loved one independent.

Preventing Falls & Improving Safety

- Dementia increases fall risks due to cognitive and motor impairments.
- OTs suggest home changes and assistive devices to prevent falls.

Creating Routines for Success

- Having a daily routine helps people with dementia feel safe and secure.
- OTs teach caregivers how to create structured routines with familiar activities.

Supporting self-care activities

- OTs help people stay as independent as possible with dressing, eating, and grooming.

Encouraging Meaningful Activities

- Engaging in (leisure) favorite pastimes can boost mood and prevent dementia-related behaviors (agitation, wandering).
- OTs help match activities to a person's cognitive level

Educating and Training Care Partners

- Care partner training includes:
 - Better communication
 - Behavior management
 - Self-care for carepartners



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- Allen Cognitive Group. (n.d.) *Core concepts*. <https://allencognitive.com/core-concepts/>.
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- Wood, J. (2021, April 30). *Finding the Person Within: Utilizing Occupational Therapy to Promote Person-Centered Care in Treatment of Individuals with Dementia*. OccupationalTherapy.com. <https://www.occupationaltherapy.com/articles/finding-person-within-utilizing-occupational-5406>