



Ten Tips For Vacationing With A Loved One Who Has Dementia

PACKING

Packing can be stressful. Be sure to pack well in advance and be aware of anxiety that it may cause for your loved one.

TIME OF DAY

Plan your travel according to the time of day that your loved one functions best. Bring light snacks and hydrating beverages. Avoid containers that spill easy or do not fit in the cupholder.

TAKE THE MOST DIRECT ROUTE

Strive for the most direct course when making travel plans. Cut travel time by avoiding scenic routes and layovers if possible.

BRING AN EMERGENCY BAG

Always have a bag with you that contains medications, medical and insurance information, contact information for doctors, back up clothing and plastic bags for any soiled clothing. Include recent photos of your loved one in case you get separated.

ADVANCE NOTICE

If traveling by airplane you can contact the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) in advance to alert them that you will be flying with a person who has dementia. Ask about expectations for security screenings. You may also be able to request early boarding, seats closest to the bathroom, etc.

Bring a card that says “my loved one has a (neurodegenerative disease, or memory issues, or dementia) we cannot be separated.” You can show it to the appropriate staff as needed.

If your loved one no longer has a license, make sure you have a valid ID such as a passport.



BUILD IN EXTRA TIME

When traveling to and from your vacation destination, and during outings throughout, be sure to build downtime into the schedule to avoid overstimulation.

MANAGE EXPECTATIONS

Consider buying travel insurance in case you need to cancel the vacation. Have a “Plan B” during the trip in the event you need to alter your itinerary due to agitation, anxiety, etc.

IDENTIFICATION

Consider purchasing an identification bracelet for your loved one and/or placing identification tags on their clothing if they tend to wander.

MAINTAIN A ROUTINE

Try to keep mealtimes and bedtime consistent with the schedule followed at home.

QUIET SPACE

Set aside a quiet space at your vacation destination for the person with dementia to use when needed.



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