



Alcohol Use

Alzheimer's

The habit of the evening cocktail may be part of a welcomed routine, but you may want to think about cutting down or cutting out alcohol while substituting other drinks in favorite cocktail glasses. Over time, the person living with dementia may care less about alcohol and simply enjoy the drink and time shared with you. Skip a battle or an argument. Instead, think ahead and plan some creative changes.

What happens

- Dementia causes a loss of short-term memory.
- The person loses their sense of time.
- The person may not remember they just had a drink and ask for another.
- Alcohol can interact with medications.
- Alcohol may seem to calm the person, but can increase confusion and lead to falls.



Tips

Subtle Switch

- Make a change to non-alcoholic beer or wine. The person does NOT need to know that you are switching products.
- Give the person a glass of water before a drink and then follow it with the nonalcoholic substitute.
- If needed, pour the non-alcoholic drink into the person's liquor bottle so it appears to be the same drink.
- For hard liquor, lessen the power of the liquid by adding water.
- If the person complains that it doesn't taste the same, apologize and let them know the next time you are at the store you will get a new bottle.
- When going out for lunch or dinner, select a restaurant that doesn't serve liquor.
- Your goal is to keep the person safe, not to argue over alcohol.

Ask For Help

- If the restaurant sells liquor, excuse yourself and discreetly ask the waiter or bartender to water down the drink & bring it with the meal.
- During a party, make your hosts aware that you are trying to limit the alcohol intake of your person and you would be glad if they could refill the glass with a non-alcoholic drink.

Success will need some pre-planning on your part. Consider taking along a companion card to help you: *My person has a condition that affects memory and thinking. Your patience is appreciated.*