



Dementia Friendly Tip Sheet

Dementia friendly communities are safe, stigma-free and supportive of people living with dementia and their care partners. Everyone should be an active participant in their own life and have full access to their community.

Why It Matters

It's time to get
smart about
brain health.

Dementia
impacts a
growing number
of people.

Most live at
home with loved
ones.

- Dementia is a term for loss of memory, language, problem-solving and other thinking abilities severe enough to interfere with daily life.
- Dementia is not normal aging. Brain health can be improved—and dementia risk lowered—via exercise, healthy diet and quality sleep.
- Alzheimer's is the most common cause of dementia, accounting for 60-80% of cases. Over 6.7 million Americans live with Alzheimer's.
- More than 280,000 Pennsylvanians are living with Alzheimer's disease, including 12% of Allegheny County residents ages 65+.
- Older Black Americans are twice as likely as white Americans to have dementia. 80% say they face barriers to dementia care.
- Over 80% of Americans with dementia live at home and are helped by family or friends. Under 20% live in memory care communities.
- In the last five years of life, out-of-pocket medical costs for dementia average \$62,000, over 80% higher than heart disease or cancer.
- In Pennsylvania, 465,000 family care partners provide 822 million hours of unpaid care (valued at \$13.7 billion) each year.
- Caregivers face significant health challenges themselves: 77% of caregivers in Pennsylvania have chronic health conditions.
- About 1 million Americans with dementia—more than 1 out of 7—live alone. About half have no identified caregiver.



Where did we source this information?

This tip sheet draws on data and info from Alzheimer's Association's 10 Healthy Habits for your Brain Facts & Figures, Black Americans and Alzheimer's and the Fact Sheet on Living Alone; the CDC, the Public Research Bureau, Dementia Friendly Greater Pittsburgh and Dementia Friendly Pennsylvania.

Who is Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh?

Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh is dedicated to making our region more inclusive and respectful of all ages. We bring generations together to reimagine how our communities are built, and to advance equity through advocacy, education and innovation.

What Age-Friendly Progress Looks Like

In our communities

- Having opportunities to learn, exercise, eat healthy food and breathe clean air—across our lifetimes
- Training people of all ages to recognize signs of dementia (e.g., confusion with time or place, new problems with words)
- Training workplaces, organizations and businesses on how to communicate with and support people living with dementia so that they can continue to actively participate in their community
- Normalizing conversations with healthcare teams about cognitive changes
- Spaces that are designed to stay well-lit and relatively quiet, with limited background noise
- Flooring that is plain (not bold patterns), smooth, non-slip and non-reflective
- Menus, instruction manuals and signage that utilize pictures and graphics, not just words

One on one

- Approaching people from the front, at eye level, and kneeling if others are seated
- Introducing yourself by name—even if you've already met
- Speaking clearly and concisely, keeping sentences and directions short (sometimes using just five words or less) or offering choices visually or verbally
- Giving people plenty of time to engage and respond
- Offering to prepare healthy meals, run errands and do other chores
- Giving care partners opportunities to care for themselves and have regular breaks

Get Involved

Want to be
an age-friendly
champion?
Get in touch!

Visit agefriendlypgph.org to:

- Sign up for our newsletter
- Download Photo Bank images
- Update your stats and facts at our Learning Hub
- Schedule a focus group or speaker

Not sure where to start?

Email info@agefriendlypgph.org or call 412-532-7144 and we'll take it from there.

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