



Alcohol Use

Alzheimer's

The ritual of the evening cocktail may be part of a welcomed routine, but you may want to consider phasing out alcohol altogether or substituting other beverages in favorite cocktail glasses. Over time, the person living with dementia may care less about the alcohol and simply enjoy the beverage and time shared with you. Avoid a battle or an argument. Instead, think ahead and plan some creative substitutions.

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 request another.
- Alcohol can interact with current medications.
- Alcohol may seem to calm the person, but may also 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 prior to the usual beverage and then follow it with the nonalcoholic substitute.
- If needed, pour the non-alcoholic beverage into the person's usual liquor bottle so it appears to be the same beverage.
- For hard liquor, dilute the bottle with a portion of water by pouring out and reserving the liquor in another container.
- 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 keep the person safe and avoid an argument over alcohol consumption.

Ask For Assistance

- 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 appreciate if they could refill the glass with a non-alcoholic beverage.

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



Alzheimer's Institute &
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For more information, visit www.BannerAlz.org
or tune into our podcast, *Dementia Untangled*