

BEFORE A DISASTER HAPPENS

People living with dementia may be at greater risk during a disaster. They might feel scared or confused. They may forget what is happening or what to do. They may get lost or upset more easily.



Build a Safety Plan

- Sign up for a safety program like L.A. Found or MedicAlert®, get a tracking device such as AirTag or Tile, or buy an identification bracelet with their name and emergency information
- Gather important papers, including:
 - Medical records
 - List of medications
 - Names & phone numbers of doctors
- Keep documents in one place, make a digital copy of important documents, and share them with trusted people
- Write a safety plan with the information above and share it with neighbors, family, and others
- Create a Support Team:
 - Choose 2–3 people nearby who can help you in an emergency
 - Pick one person who lives far away to help if the phones stop working.
 - Let your local fire and police department know someone with dementia lives nearby and may need extra help during a disaster

Make a “Go Bag” & Shelter Plan

Pack enough supplies for 3–5 days in a bag that’s easy to carry:

Emergency Items

- Copy of ID, health insurance, Power of Attorney, POLST, and medication list
- List of emergency contacts, including doctors and care services like pharmacies, home health, palliative care, or hospice agencies
- Snacks, water, and other comfort foods as well as long-lasting foods
- Familiar comfort items (like a blanket, soft toy, or photo book)
- A recent photo of the person with dementia
- A first-aid kit
- Flashlight, battery-powered radio for news updates, and extra batteries

Medical & Daily Needs

- 3-day supply of all medications
- Extra glasses, hearing aids and batteries
- Incontinence supplies, wipes, hygiene items, and extra clothes
- Small cooler or ice packs if medication needs to stay cold
- Label important health equipment with instructions
- Make a list of any equipment that uses electricity (like oxygen or insulin pumps)
 - Tell your power company if you need power to stay safe—ask for priority service during outages

WHEN A DISASTER HAPPENS

If You Need to Leave (Evacuate)

- Leave early; do not wait for official orders
- Use short, simple words and hand signals to explain what's happening
- Try saying: "We're going to be safe now," or "Let's take a little trip together"
- Write their name and emergency contact information on clothes & bags
- Always keep the person with you

At the Shelter or Temporary Housing

- Tell the shelter staff that the person you are caring for has dementia
- Ask for a quiet space away from loud areas
- Be mindful of what your person watches on TV, or reduce TV time
- Try to keep regular times for meals, sleep, and medicine
- Help them rest, drink water, and ask for help if needed

Get Medical Help If

- The person is not feeling well: more confused, weak, dizzy, not using the bathroom, upset, restless, or acting differently
- They missed their medicines for a long time
- Nothing is helping, and they seem to be getting worse



Use the IDEA! Approach if behavioral challenges arise

IDEA! Behavioral Approach:

Identify – What is the exact behavior?

Explore – What might be triggering the behavior? Health issues, pain, fear, overstimulation, something task-related, or something in the environment?

Adjust – Stay calm, use simple words, break things down into simple steps, use praise and reassurance

LOCAL & NATIONAL RESOURCES

Alzheimer's Los Angeles Helpline
844-HELP-ALZ (844-435-7259)

LA Found (Wandering Safety Program):
lafound.lacounty.gov

211 LA:
Shelter, food, transportation, health services

Red Cross Safe & Well:
redcross.org/safeandwell

FEMA Emergency Alerts & App:
ready.gov/alerts

Disability Disaster Help:
<https://disabilitydisasteraccess.org/>

National Dementia Disaster Toolkit:
<https://pblob1storage.blob.core.windows.net/public/nadrc/docs/NADRCdisasterplanToolkit508readonly.pdf>



844.HELP.ALZ | AlzheimersLA.org