

What to Do After Being Diagnosed with Dementia



Have you just been diagnosed with dementia or Alzheimer's? If so, you may be feeling scared right now. It's okay to feel scared, worried and unsure of what your future will look like. But there are things you can do right now to help stay in control of your health and happiness. This will also help your family as you walk through this journey of a new diagnosis.

Here are some things you can start doing today to help you and your family cope with this new phase in your life:

Tell your primary care provider (PCP) about your diagnosis.

Did your diagnosis come from someone other than your PCP? If so, you'll want to give your PCP an update on your new diagnosis. Contact them and fill them in on what has happened. They may want you to come in for a visit to find out what your needs are and how they can support you at this time.

Tell your Care Manager about your diagnosis.

Do you work with a CareSource Care Manager? If so, this is also a good time to give them an update on your new diagnosis. This way, your Care Manager can start looking at support services you may need in the home or community. Your Care Manager can provide you resources to help cope with your diagnosis. Also, your Care Manager can refer you to services that may help you and your family during this time.

Don't have a Care Manager?

Call Member Services at **1-833-230-2020** (TTY: 711) or the D-SNP Care Management team at **1-844-679-7867** to start working with a Care Manager.



Set up autopay for recurring payments.

You probably have recurring payments. Maybe it's for your rent and utilities. Maybe it's a subscription. Either way, you are probably billed for these things on a regular basis. When you have dementia or Alzheimer's, it can get harder and harder to remember. To avoid issues in case you forget to make payments, consider setting autopay for these bills. This means the company will automatically take money from your bank account. You could also add someone you trust to your account in case you need help paying your bills in the future.

Fill out a durable power of attorney (DPOA) form.

You can choose a family member to take care of you and/or your finances. They must be 18 years or older. They must be someone you can trust to make the right decisions for you. If you have someone in mind for this, talk to them and let them know your wishes. This can be done by talking or writing down your wishes. You can go over how you would like your money to be handled. You can also go over how you would like to be taken care of in case you become ill. Once you go over this and your DPOA agrees, fill out a DPOA form.

Not sure who to ask?

If you don't have anyone you feel is the right fit to be your DPOA, contact your Care Manager. They can help you find local support services.

Create a will.

Creating or updating your will is a good idea at this time. Your will would paint a very clear picture of who should get your money and belongings once you pass. You can make changes to your will as long as you can prove that you understand what you're doing. You also must show you understand what the effects will be.

Create a living will.

A living will will help you tell others exactly how you want things to be handled if you become very ill. Do you want doctors and surgeons to try and save your life, no matter what? Or would you rather just let things happen as they may? You might indicate whether or not to use CPR, IV fluids or feed you through a g-tube. These directions will be helpful for your DPOA also. A living will is different from your regular will. A living will only touches on what medical treatment to give you when your condition worsens. It has nothing to do with handling your money or belongings after your death.

Keep documents organized.

Make sure all the documents we just went over can be found easily. These would include legal documents like:

- Your DPOA form.
- Your regular will.
- Your living will.

You will also want to keep track of your bank statements, bills and tax documents. You can ask your DPOA or someone else you trust to help you organize your documents.

Create a life story.

Create a memory book with photos and stories about your life and memories. Memory books can help you remember good times in your life. Memory books will be something special for you to share with your family.

Helpful Resources

Being diagnosed with dementia or Alzheimer's is a life-changing event. If you're feeling stressed, sad or just having a tough time, know that CareSource is here for you. Explore the below tools:

Care Management Program

Our Care Management program can help you learn more about and manage your dementia. Your Care Managers can remind you about upcoming visits and work with your providers. They can also find resources that will help you stay healthy.

Call Member Services at **1-833-230-2020** (TTY: **711**) if you would like to be part of the Care Management program.

BrainHQ®

BrainHQ provides the exercise your brain needs to be at its sharpest. Think of it as a personal gym where you exercise your memory, attention, brain speed, people skills, navigation, intelligence and more! You can use BrainHQ on CareSource.BrainHQ.com. You can also download the BrainHQ app to your mobile device. This tool is free as part of your CareSource plan benefits.

Call Member Services at **1-833-230-2020** (TTY: **711**) or your Care Manager to get access to the BrainHQ tool.

