

Adult Day Self-Care Newsletter

May 2022

The Magic of Movement

Probably you already know that exercise is good for you and can reduce your risk of heart disease. But have you heard the expression “What’s good for the heart is good for the brain”? Physical activity has a positive effect on cognition—especially for people with mild cognitive impairment. Regular exercise can reduce fall risk and problem behaviors. Engaging in physical activity during the day can improve mood and promote better sleep. Many people wonder, “What’s the best exercise?” The answer from the experts is, “whatever you enjoy and will do often.” Adult Day Center staff may wonder, “What’s the best movement or exercise activity to do at our Center?” The answer is similar—not just whatever people can do safely, but whatever people seem to enjoy. Consider the many ways you can encourage your program participants to move their bodies during the day. Simple and gentle movements count, like clapping, or tapping the table, or using a [percussion shaker](#) while listening to lively music. For people who are able, you might offer moderate level activities like walking around, swaying to music, stretching, or chair voga. We offer some tips for movement activities on page 2.

Exercise Toolkit to Help People with Dementia

In a 2021 article, a research team in Ontario, Canada, reported on their project called, “Dementia-Inclusive Choices for Exercise” or DICE. The goal of the project was to produce resources to increase exercise opportunities for people living with dementia.

Now their [website](#) offers online training and resources for service providers who offer exercise programs and activities. The training requires registration, includes five modules and quizzes, and offers a certificate once the training is completed. There is an *Exercise Guide* (manual), as well as physical activity guidelines, which are both free to download. Brief videos may be useful for staff training and sharing with families.

While much of this material seems geared towards people in the early stages, many of the tips in the *Exercise Guide* apply to supporting people who are experiencing more challenges.

Middleton, L. E. et al. (2021). Using participatory research to co-create the Dementia-Inclusive Choices for Exercise toolkit (poster presentation). *The Journal of the Alzheimer’s Association*, 17(Suppl. 7), e053215.



National Senior Health & Fitness Day

On Wednesday, May 25, many community locations will sponsor activities focused on the importance of regular physical activity for older adults. Check with your local YMCA or fitness centers for events in your area. This will be a great day to share information with family members and to do a few fitness activities at your Center! Try something new and different or an old favorite.

Planning Movement Activities

Build in movement throughout the day. A few scheduled exercise activities will help keep people active and awake. For many people, physical activity will relieve stress and lessen challenging behaviors.

Schedule exercise right before lunch and at the end of the day, not right after lunch!

In general, shorter sessions work best, about 45 minutes or less.

Even if you are very clear about how the activity will work, it can be helpful to have a written description and/or a brief script. This allows other staff to follow along or lead the activity on their own.

Tell everyone what they will be doing. Demonstrate movements. Be available to physically guide people who might need a tactile cue.

Arrange chairs so participants can see each other. If possible, encourage the people who are able to follow directions and complete the exercises to sit near or between the people who are likely to be distracted during the activity.

Some people may benefit from having something to hold, such as a stress ball, or a "target," such as "reach out and touch the chair in front of you."

Keep your voice calm and upbeat.

Consider changing group leaders when switching from one activity (like an exercise activity) to another (like crafts or singing).

After the activity, or at the end of the program day, make some notes about what went well and what might be improved. These will come in handy for the next time.

For More Information

If you are interested in learning more about movement and exercise for people with dementia, here are some references and resources here.

Chair Yoga is an adaptive program that can be enjoyable and beneficial to people with limited mobility. Click to see a [demonstration video](#).

The National Institute on Aging has created a series of [stretching exercise videos](#) for older adults as well as exercises for [strength](#) and [balance](#). If these aren't a good match for people who attend your program, they may be helpful to share with staff and family members.

Check out the Adult Day section of our website. Our [Foundations Manual](#) includes tips on activities. We are continuing to add *Foundations* training videos as we complete them.

As always, you can access the Self-Care resources, including our *Move* video, on our website for free.

Self-Care for Professional Caregivers

www.care2caregivers.com/self-care

Upcoming Caregiver Education 2022

Seize the Day: Meaningful Ways to Add Structure and Fun to Your Day
May 25, 2022 1:00pm

Click [HERE](#) to register

Brain Health: Strategies for Staying Well While Caring for a Loved One with Memory Loss

June 22, 2022 1:00pm

Click [HERE](#) to register

For more info email Mary Catherine:
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visit our website www.care2caregivers.com for information on caregiver support groups

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