

# Dementia Friendly Emergency Planning



Emergency situations — such as tornadoes, heat waves, fires, and blizzards — can significantly impact safety, especially for individuals living with dementia, who may find them distressing and confusing. Being prepared is crucial.

Learn more:

**LifeStream Services:**

800-589-1121 or [lifestreaminc.org](http://lifestreaminc.org)

**Alzheimer's Association:**

800-272-3900 or [alz.org](http://alz.org)

## Preparation

- Check weather conditions regularly before leaving the house and adjust plans as needed. For example, if a storm is predicted, consider rescheduling appointments that are not urgent.
- Prepare an emergency supply kit. Purchase extra medications; keep other supplies well stocked.
- Provide copies of the person's medical history, a list of medications, doctor information, and family contacts to people other than the primary caregiver.

## Extreme Heat

- Wear light, breathable fabrics like linen, cotton, and jersey to stay cool outside. Choose lighter colors, as they absorb less heat. Use a hat and sunscreen for sun protection.
- Increase water intake to stay hydrated. Watch for signs of dehydration, which may be hard to notice in individuals living with dementia. Common signs of dehydration include a dry, sticky mouth, decreased urination or dark urine, unexplained tiredness, and feeling dizzy or lightheaded.

## Extreme Cold

- Bundle up. Help the person living with dementia dress warmly for winter weather by wearing dry, loose-fitting layers and covering exposed skin with clothing. Remove layers as necessary to prevent overheating.
- Prevent slips. Assume all surfaces are slippery and assist the person with smaller steps and slower movements. Keep walkways clear and use handrails for added stability.

## Evacuations or Emergencies

- Be sure the evacuation plan takes special needs into consideration. For example, if the person living with dementia uses a walker or wheelchair, how will accommodations be made?
- Stay together or with a group; it only takes a moment to get lost. Do not leave the person with dementia alone.
- When appropriate, share the person's diagnosis with others, such as hotel or shelter staff, family members and airline attendants, so they can better assist.