

RISKS & SAFETY

**Managing risks in
Dementia:**

1. Kitchen Safety

2. Medication Safety

3. Managing Finances

Why Risks Increase with Dementia



Brain and body changes in someone living with dementia can affect their safety. As the condition progresses, these changes may affect their:

- Ability to see clearly
- Understanding of depth and distance
- Hearing
- Balance
- Feeling of hot and cold
- Awareness of dangers around them
- Decision-making
- Ability to plan, remember things, and control their actions

They might take more risks because they may not fully understand what could happen or know their own limits.

Watch for warning signs and use the tips below to keep your loved one safe while helping them stay independent and maintain their dignity as long as possible.

WARNING SIGNS

IN

Kitchen Safety



Forgetting to turn off the stove

E.g. Starting to cook but walking away and forgetting



Forgetting how to use kitchen appliances

E.g. Setting microwave for minutes instead of seconds



Reverting to past habits

E.g. Putting the electric kettle on the stove because they used to boil water with a stove-top kettle



Having trouble with sharp objects

E.g. Difficulty using knives safely

HELPFUL TIPS

IN

Kitchen Safety



Make appliances safer:

- Put clear labels/pictures showing how to use appliances
- Switch from gas stove to induction cooktop
- Install safety knobs on stove to prevent accidental turning
- Use appliances that turn off automatically (e.g. rice cooker)
- Turn off the main gas valve when cooking is not supervised



Handle utensils safely:

- Use utensils with blunt tips when possible
- Keep sharp items in a drawer that can be locked or is out of reach.



HELPFUL TIPS

IN

Kitchen Safety



Store items safely:

- Keep cleaning products away from food
- Check food expiry dates regularly
- Throw away expired food



Use alarms

- Install smoke alarms
- Set cooking reminders using alarms or timers



Be prepared

- Keep a fire extinguisher ready

WARNING SIGNS

IN

Medication Safety



Too much medication left:

- Having extra medicines left when it is time for the next doctor's visit may mean your loved one is forgetting to take their medicine



Too little medication left:

- Running out of medicine too early before the next appointment may mean they are taking too much of it



Changes in health readings:

- High blood pressure or blood sugar readings, even with high dose of medication, may mean they are not taking their medication

HELPFUL TIPS

IN Medication Safety



Check medications regularly:

- Count the remaining pills to track if medication is being taken
- Check if medicines are expired or have changed colour
- Make sure medicines are not being thrown away into the dustbin or toilet bowl
- Watch your loved one swallow their medicine to ensure they are not hiding it in their mouth
- Review all medication instructions after each doctor's visit - including which medicines to take, how often to take them, and whether to take them before or after food



HELPFUL TIPS

IN

Medication Safety



Work with your doctor:

- Ask if it is possible to reduce the number of medicines
- See if the medication schedule can be made simpler



Organise medications:

- Use a labelled pill box (e.g. a 7-day box with morning, afternoon, and evening sections)
- Consider using pre-packed medicine packs
- Ask the pharmacist about medication organisation services
- Look into home nursing or medication packing services



HELPFUL TIPS

IN

Medication Safety



Set medication reminders:

- Write medicine times on a calendar
- Make a daily checklist
- Set phone alarms
- Use an automatic pill dispenser with alarm
- Call your loved one to check if they have taken their medicine



WARNING SIGNS

IN Managing Finances



Problems at home:

- Misplacing money



Transaction difficulties at shops:

- Paying the incorrect amount
- Getting confused about change
- Forgetting to pay



Spending problems:

- Buying the same things repeatedly
- Buying inappropriate items
- Not being able to track spending
- Spending money without thinking
- Giving money to strangers



WARNING SIGNS

IN Managing Finances



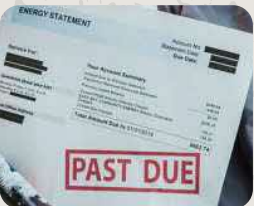
Money value problems:

- Having trouble understanding money values
- Not knowing which notes are worth more



Banking problems:

- Unusual money withdrawals
- Taking money out too often
- Withdrawing very large amounts of money

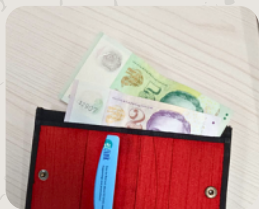


Financial disorganisation:

- Forgetting to pay regular bills
- Getting unusual credit card charges

HELPFUL TIPS

IN Managing Finances



Help with handling money:

- Use smaller notes (avoid coins if they are confusing)
- Pack small amounts in labelled envelopes (e.g. "taxi money")
- Set daily spending limits



Shopping assistance:

- Go shopping together
- Provide a written shopping list
- Visit familiar stores
- Ask the store staff to help watch out for your loved one



HELPFUL TIPS

IN Managing Finances



Bank account management:

- Set up withdrawal alerts
- Create a joint bank account
- Set limits on credit cards



Bill payment help:

- Set up automatic bill payments