



Alcohol Use

The ritual of the evening cocktail may be part of a welcomed routine. Consider phasing out alcohol altogether & substituting other beverages in favorite cocktail glasses. Over time, the person with dementia will care less about the alcohol & simply enjoy the beverage & time shared with you. Don't make it a battle or get into arguments. Think ahead & plan some creative substitutions.

This too shall pass...

What happens:

- Dementia causes a loss of short-term memory
- The person loses their sense of time
- The person may not remember they just had a drink and request another
- Alcohol can interact with current medications
- Alcohol may seem to calm the person, but may also increase confusion & lead to falls

Strategies:

Subtle Switch

- Make a change to non-alcoholic beer or wine. The person does NOT need to know that you are switching products.
- Give the person a glass of water prior to the usual beverage and then follow it with the nonalcoholic substitute.
- If needed, pour the non-alcoholic beverage into the person's usual liquor bottle so s/he believes it is the same beverage.
- For hard liquor, dilute the bottle with a portion of water by pouring out & reserving the liquor in another container.
- If the person complains that it doesn't taste the same, apologize and let them know the next time you are at the store you will get a new bottle.
- When going out for lunch or dinner, select a restaurant that doesn't serve liquor.
- Your goal is keep the person safe and avoid an argument over alcohol consumption.

Ask For Assistance

- If the restaurant sells liquor, excuse yourself & discreetly ask the waiter or bartender to water down the drink & bring it with the meal.
- During a party, make your hosts aware that you are trying to limit the alcohol intake of your person & you'd appreciate if they could refill the glass with a non-alcoholic beverage.

Success will require some pre-planning on your part. Consider taking along a companion card to assist you: My person has a condition that affects memory & thinking. Your patience is appreciated.