

# “Ideas for Meal Times & Good Nourishment”



We all know that good nourishment is important to the elderly. Mealtimes can be especially frustrating to the family who has a loved one with dementia.

Here are some tips and ideas:

- Think about how a two year old would act at meal time and adjust your behavior accordingly.
- A travel mug with a lid and straw may help diminish spills.
- Offer smaller portions.
- Offer finger foods if utensils cannot be used anymore or the person can't seem to sit at the table and wants to pace.
- Enlist the person with dementia to help with simple food preparation tasks such as setting the table, stirring lemonade, etc.
- Offer and eat well-balanced meals. There is no specific Alzheimer's diet. A heart healthy diet is best.
- Dehydration makes a person feel fatigue. So make sure everyone drinks 6-8 cups of water or liquid per day. Jello, popsicles, soup and melons all count toward fluid intake.
- Offer food on a solid red or blue plate. Research has shown that an Alzheimer's patients will eat as much as 25% more if food is served on a solid red or blue plate.
- Plates with patterns are sometimes confusing to the dementia patient.
- The patient with dementia may struggle seeing white on white. There needs to be contrast.
- Too many utensils/condiments on the table may cause confusion. Keep it simple.
- Keep mealtime a happy time. Help the person with dementia keep focused so they will receive adequate nutritional intake.
- If weight loss is a problem, offer meals high in calories.
- Provide food that the person with dementia enjoys.
- If you are the caregiver, sit down with the person with dementia – take a load off and try to enjoy your meal, too.

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## Five Finger Prayer

This is a good, simple way to focus our prayers.

1. Your thumb is nearest to you. So begin your prayers by praying for those closest to you. They are the easiest to remember. To pray for our loved ones is, as C. S. Lewis once said, a "sweet duty."
2. The next finger is the pointing finger. Pray for those who teach, instruct and heal. This includes teachers, doctors, and ministers. They need support and wisdom in pointing others in the right direction. Keep them in your prayers.
3. The next finger is the tallest finger. It reminds us of our leaders. Pray for the president, leaders in business and industry, and administrators. These people shape our nation and guide public opinion. They need God's guidance. Also include our servicemen and women here and abroad who stand tall in the duty of defending and protecting our nation. They need God's strength and comfort.
4. The fourth finger is our ring finger. As any piano teacher with testify, this is our weakest finger. It should remind us to pray for those who are weak, in trouble, or in pain. These individuals need your prayers day and night. You cannot pray too much for them.
5. Lastly comes our little finger which is the smallest finger of all. This reminds us where we should place ourselves in relation to God and others. Jesus reminded us that "the least shall be the greatest among us." Your pinkie should remind you to pray for yourself. By the time you have prayed for the other four groups, your own needs will be put into proper perspective and you will be able to pray for yourself more effectively.



Make the Five Finger prayer  
a part of your life!

“But let all who take refuge in you be  
glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread  
your protection over them, that those  
who loves our name may rejoice in you”  
Psalm 5:11