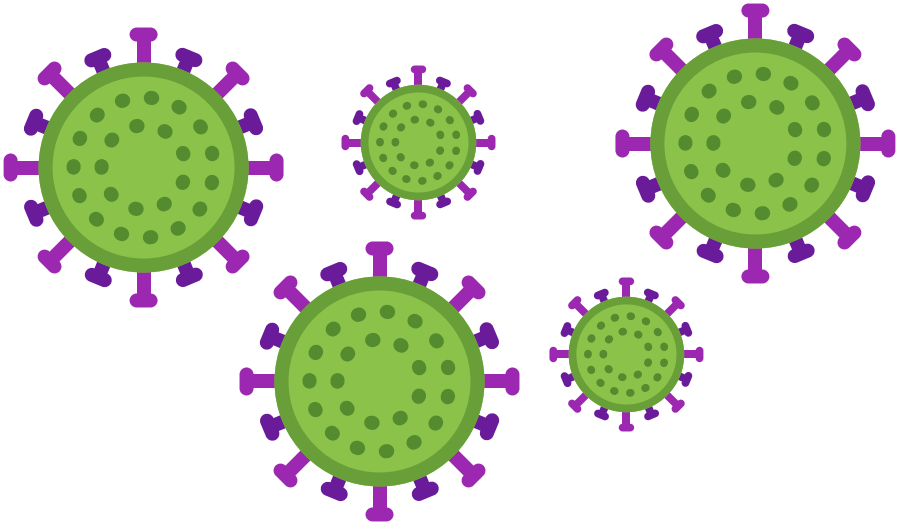
Staying at home and dementia care

This leaflet explains what BAME family carers can do to try and look after yourself and the person with dementia through the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic



Meri Yaadain CiC

Supporting Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) people living with or caring for someone with dementia

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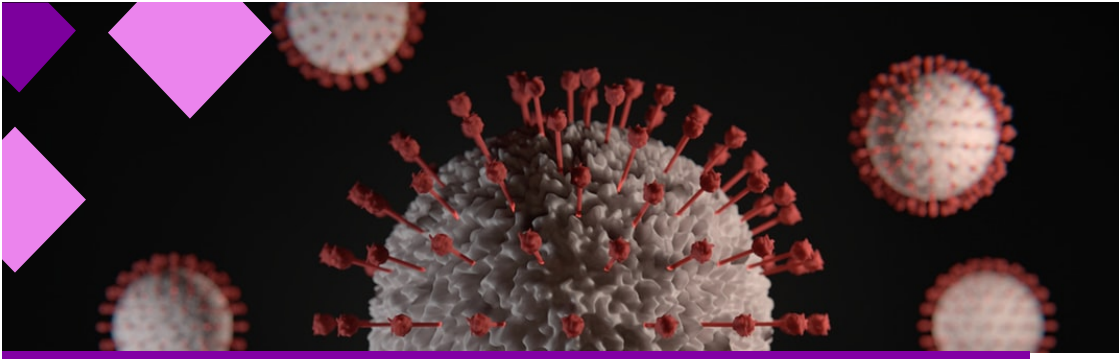


Looking after yourself and the relative living with dementia

Lots of carers will struggle to look after their relative living with dementia. You need to accept that it will not be easy and therefore it is ok to ask for help. Relatives and the community may make caring for dementia difficult because of stigma, but you know that you need to stay well yourself and try to keep the person with dementia well too. In this leaflet we are suggesting some ways of looking after yourself and your relative living with dementia.

Looking after yourself

- Recognise that caring can be difficult and that it is ok to ask for help
- Wash your hands regularly as advised by the NHS
- Try to minimise contact with other people wherever possible
- Only go out for essentials such as food
- Try to get some exercise, even if it is in the garden or indoors
- Keep up to date with advice and guidance on COVID-19 (you can look at NHS, Government or carer websites - see back of this leaflet)
- Try to plan ahead with what activities you can do for the person with dementia
- Check if you can contact a local carer support organisation to help you make a plan for emergencies - including if you get poorly
- Think about getting a break, perhaps meditate, pray, read a book, do something you enjoy like cooking or gardening.

Looking after your relative living with dementia

Coping with caring for your relative who has dementia may test your ability to manage the situation. This will be especially true, if their routine is changed and if they are living with middle to later stages of dementia.

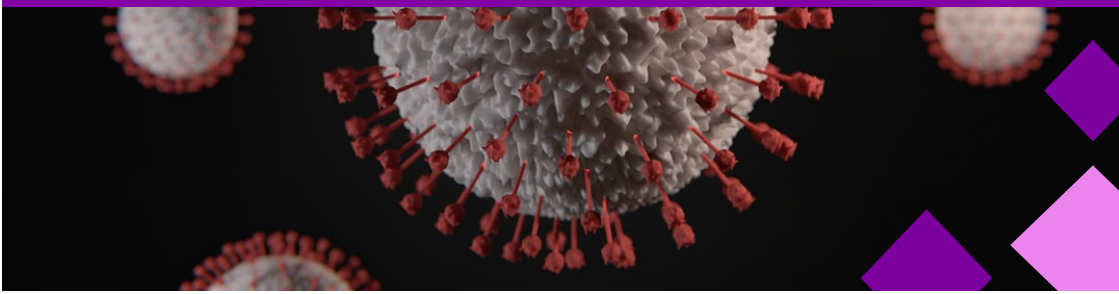
Practical steps can be taken to include faith, language, food and family to help you get through any difficult times.

Faith can help you and them relax and feel calm. Perhaps play their favourite hymn, prayers, recitation. You might want to sit with them and do some reading, zikr, chanting or simple meditation. Be led by what they like listening to, so that they feel supported, happy or simply relaxed.

You can do some simple exercise at home or go for a walk in the local area. If you do go out, please make sure you abide by Government advice regarding social distancing. You could plan simple sports type activities in the garden. Keeping active will help them burn off some energy and get tired (becoming calmer and more relaxed).

Play games, read books, watch videos, old photographs, cooking, gardening to keep their mind active and busy.

Communication with support groups, your GP practice, social services, dementia support organisations will be important to help you with advice, support and encouragement on how to support the person with dementia. You can use media such as video calling to keep a connection with friends and family too to maintain contact between your relative with dementia and their family and friends.



REMEMBER

You need to look after yourself as the carer as well as trying to minimise the risks for the person you are caring for.

1. Stay home and stay safe
2. Wash hands regularly with soap and warm water. Encourage the person with dementia to do so too
3. Make a plan (including for emergencies)
4. Speak to your faith leader by phone or play faith recitation/music via internet
4. Encourage friends and family to keep contact via video calling
5. Speak to a carers' support organisation for an emergency plan should you become too poorly to take care of the person with dementia
6. If you are struggling speak to your local Social Services
7. Engage in activities at home, to keep the person with dementia engaged through games, tv, books, films, arts and crafts or go for a walk staying local and abiding by Government advice regarding social distancing.

Local, regional and national organisations can help and advise. Information on their websites will also offer advice and guidance:

Alzheimer's Society: 0333 150 3456
https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/coronavirus-covid-19

Dementia UK: 0800 888 6678
https://www.dementiauk.org

Carers UK:
https://www.carersuk.org/help-and-advice/health/looking-after-your-health/coronavirus-covid-19

Gov.UK:
https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus

NHS:
https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/

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Alzheimer's Society
United Against Dementia

BME Health & Wellbeing
Promoting health equality & preventative solutions

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