

Traveling with a loved one with Alzheimer's this long weekend? Experts have tips

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People can create many special moments if they include a loved one with dementia in their end-of-summer Labor Day getaway.

However, they'll need to take some special steps to make traveling as smooth as possible, according to the Alzheimer's Foundation of America (AFA).

"One last summer trip on Labor Day weekend can mean dealing with [heavy traffic](#) and packed [airports](#), challenges which become even greater if you're traveling with someone who has dementia," Jennifer Reeder, the AFA's director of educational and social services, said in a news release.

"Whether it's a quick road trip or flying far away, there are preparations and adaptations caregivers should make to help their loved ones with dementia feel more comfortable and relaxed while traveling," Reeder added.

The AFA's recommendations include:

Simplify the itinerary: Keep the travel schedule simple. Resist the urge to jam-pack a trip with sights, destinations and attractions. Avoid tight connections or multiple stops, if possible.

Plan around the person: Consider your loved one's needs, abilities and routines when arranging travel. For example, they might travel better at a specific time of day, or they might normally eat around a certain time. Build your travel around those considerations, as small changes can feel overwhelming and stressful to someone with dementia.

Stock up: Bring snacks, water, activities and comfort items the person might need. For example, an extra set of comfortable clothes can help your loved one adapt to changes in climate. Take their important health documents and a list of current medications. Make sure that your loved one wears an ID bracelet with your contact information.

Know the security procedures of airports and train stations: Ask in advance about security screening procedures, so you can prepare your loved one for checkpoints. The Transportation Security Administration offers assistance with the [screening process](#) to air travelers with dementia.

Advise the airline: Let the airline know you're traveling with someone with dementia, and inform them of any safety concerns or special needs.

Find a quiet space: Some airports have designated quiet areas for people with special needs, such as those with [dementia](#). These provide a peaceful respite from crowds and noise.

Build in break time: If traveling by car, take regular breaks to eat, use the restroom and rest.

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