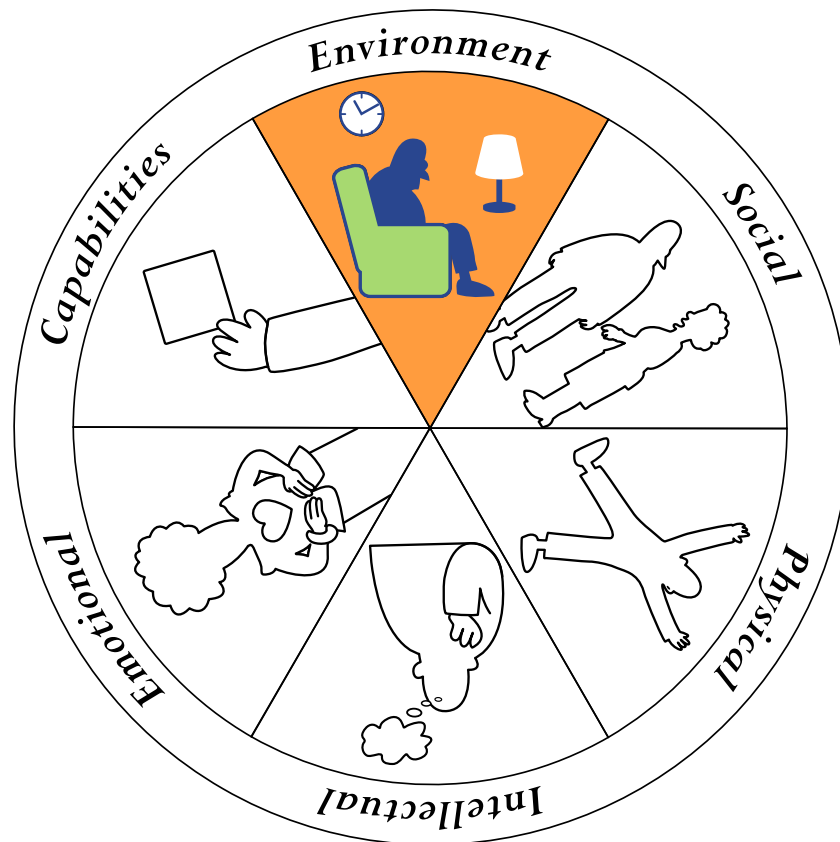


UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF YOUR ENVIRONMENT



The P.I.E.C.E.S.™ model describes key factors that affect your experience with dementia.

P – physical well-being	Look after your physical health.
I – intellectual well-being	Manage the symptoms of dementia.
E – emotional well-being	Look after your mental health.
C – capabilities	Recognize and use your strengths.
E – environment	Make the most of your environment.
S – social	Record and share your life story.

If you don't have all of the subsections of P.I.E.C.E.S.™, you can find them and the rest of “My Guide for Living with Dementia” at www.dementianetworksc.org/myguide or at your local Alzheimer Society office.



*This part of
“My Guide for Living with Dementia”
is about your dementia and
the impact of your environment.*



Each Person responds differently to environmental factors. Some people love hot, humid weather while others find these conditions very uncomfortable. Some people enjoy having music on in the background while others prefer quiet.

Temperature, noise, and other environmental factors have the ability to make life difficult or uncomfortable. Fortunately, those same factors can also make life easier or more comfortable. This section includes information about these environmental factors along with some helpful strategies.

Your experience with dementia will also be influenced by your environment. It will be important for you and your Partners in Care to recognize the environmental factors that help you, as well as those that hinder you. Fill in the ‘**Getting to Know Me**’ pages to help your Partners in Care to adjust the environment to suit you.

Partners in Care are people who support you and would benefit from knowing more about you. Partners in Care may include your friends and family, your family doctor or other professionals.

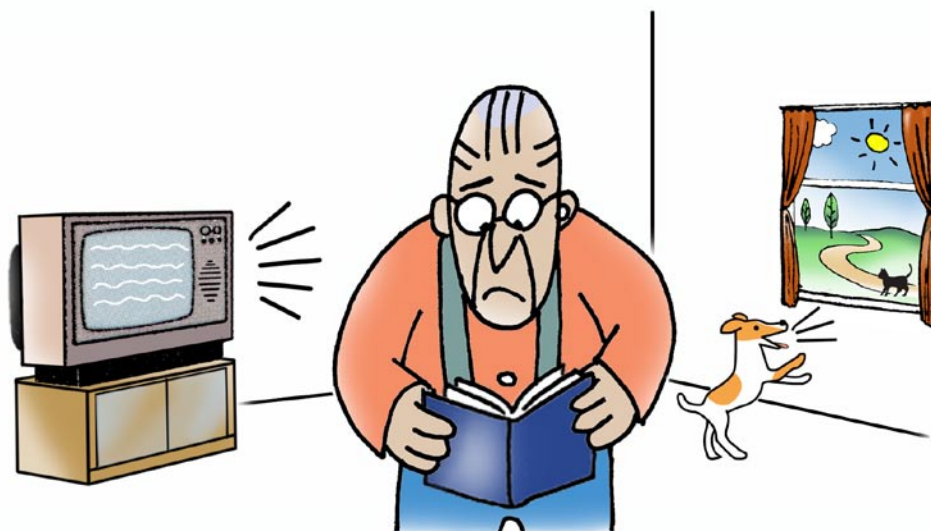
Dementia is a general term describing a set of symptoms. These symptoms may include memory loss, language problems, decreased understanding and changes in judgement among others. These symptoms are severe enough to interfere with daily activities.



ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

Noise

Dementia may affect your ability to pay attention to many different things at the same time. A noisy environment can limit your ability to follow a conversation, concentrate on a book or finish a meal. However, if you always had the television on during mealtime, or the radio on when you were home, you may have a greater tolerance for this background noise and miss it when it's gone. Some previously familiar noises, such as the telephone, microwave or cats meowing may bother you now or seem unfamiliar.



Tips about noise and the environment:

- If you find it difficult to concentrate, reduce background noise.
 - Turn off the television and radio.
 - Ask other people in your household to keep the volume down when they are listening to music or television.
- Record your preferences about noise on the [‘Getting to Know Me’ - Noise, Lighting, Temperature](#) page. Share your preferences with Partners in Care.



ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

Lighting & Colours

Dementia may affect your perception and how you see your environment. Hallways or corners that are dimly lit may have shadows that you find unsettling or frightening. Doors and walls that are painted the same colour may seem to blend together. This will make it difficult to see the door. Floors that have a high gloss finish may appear to be wet in strong light. Patterns on floors and fabric may appear to be a real object or appear to be moving.



Tips about lighting and the environment:

- Turn the lights on before sunset in the rooms that you use most.
- Add more lighting if you aren't able to see corners well.
- Consider marking doors or cupboards that blend in by hanging a decoration, labeling with a sign or by painting them a contrasting colour.
- Record your preferences about lighting on the [‘Getting to Know Me’ - Noise, Lighting, Temperature](#) page. Share your preferences with Partners in Care.



ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

Temperature

It is important that your Partners in Care know what temperature you prefer for comfort. Equipment such as furnaces or air conditioners, that have to be turned off or on or set for the season, may require reminders and planning now that you have dementia.



Tips about temperature and the environment:

- Develop a plan with your Partners in Care to help you with seasonal adjustments, for example:
 - Storm windows
 - Air conditioning, furnace
 - Fireplace
 - Water filters
- Record your preferences on the ['Getting to Know Me' - Noise, Lighting, Temperature](#) page at the end of this section.





KEY SITUATIONS

Social Gatherings

Family gatherings or other large social events can be noisy and chaotic. While some people love this kind of environment, others may not enjoy it at all. Now that you have dementia, you may be aware of feeling anxious, tired or even overwhelmed in these situations.



Tips for handling large events:

- Plan your arrival and departure ahead of time to limit your stay.
- Find a quiet spot for visits or time alone.
- Limit the number of people who visit you at one time.
- Evaluate whether or not you want to participate in a large event.
Perhaps you would feel more comfortable arranging some other way to see family and friends such as meeting individually for coffee or a meal.





KEY SITUATIONS

Traveling or Moving

A trip or a move can be very exciting but an unfamiliar environment can also cause a great deal of anxiety.



Tips for traveling or moving:

- Bring and use important and/or familiar items.
- Label cupboard doors, boxes or suitcases to help you remember what they contain. You can also post directions to important rooms or objects.
- Write down your daily routine and continue to follow it as much as possible. Include your normal wake and sleep times, your usual morning, afternoon and evening activities and anything else that is important to you. Use the **'Getting to Know Me' - My Routines** pages at the end of this section.

New Partners in Care

You may experience changes to your environment or routine when new Partners in Care come into your home to help you. Examples include: Case Managers with the Community Care Access Centre (CCAC), Personal Support Workers and therapists. The more new Partners in Care know about your normal routines and preferences, the better they can help you manage your dementia.



Tips for working with new Partners in Care:

- Use "My Guide for Living with Dementia" and share the **'Getting to Know Me'** pages with new Partners.



ENVIRONMENT



General Tips:

- Keep important items in the same place, for example:
 - Record appointment information on the calendar by the phone.
 - Place purse or wallet in the top drawer of your dresser.
- Plan appointments and other outings when you are feeling your best. For example, it is easier to manage a busy shopping centre when you are well rested.
- Remove clutter from your environment, for example:
 - Clear off kitchen and bathroom counters and only leave out what you need each day.
 - Remove scatter rugs and excess furniture in your path.
 - Put away out of season items such as clothing and footwear.





SUMMARY

This part of “My Guide for Living with Dementia” was about your **environment**, which includes both the larger world and your own home.

The following ‘**Getting to Know Me**’ pages can be used every few months to monitor your response to your environment. Fill them in with your Partners in Care. They may see changes that you have not noticed.



Some final tips about your environment!

- Get rid of clutter.
- Ensure rooms, hallways and stairways are well-lit.
- Re-organize so that frequently used items are in the same place and within easy reach.

The information provided on **environmental** factors was very general and may not have described your particular situation or answered all your questions. Write down your questions here and consider contacting your local Alzheimer Society office to discuss them further.

You have now finished ‘**environment**’. The next subsection is about your social history.

If you don’t have all of the subsections of P.I.E.C.E.S.[™], you can find them and the rest of “My Guide for Living with Dementia” (including a Resource Section) at www.dementianetworksc.org/myguide or at your local Alzheimer Society office.

'Getting to Know Me' – Noise, Lighting, Temperature

Review this page every few months for accuracy.



Date: _____

Noise

I prefer a quiet environment. Yes No

Comments: _____

I like it when there is lots of activity and noise. Yes No

Comments: _____

I like to have the television or radio on most of the time. Yes No

Comments: _____

Now that I have dementia, I notice: _____

Lighting

I think that I need better lighting. Yes No

Comments: _____

Now that I have dementia, I notice: _____

Temperature *(e.g., cool vs. warm)*

I prefer that my home is cool. Yes No

Comments: _____

I am always cold and want the heat on. Yes No

Now that I have dementia, I notice: _____

'Getting to Know Me' – My Environment

Review this page every few months for accuracy.



ENVIRONMENT



E

Date: _____

General

I like to keep busy with a lot of different activities. Yes No

Comments: _____

It's important for me to have my house tidy. Yes No

Comments: _____

I am sensitive to strong fragrances and perfumes. Yes No

Comments: _____

I like to spend time outside. Yes No

Comments: _____

Items that I like to have handy are: _____

'Getting to Know Me' – My Routines (page 1 of 2)

Review this page every few months for accuracy.



SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT



Date: _____

I wake up at: _____

My breakfast routine is: *(time, foods, alone or with others)* _____

I prefer: tea coffee other I take it with: _____

I prefer: bath shower Time of day: _____

My lunchtime routine is: *(time, foods, alone or with others)* _____

I nap. Yes No When? _____ How long? _____

My evening meal routine is: *(time, foods, alone or with others)* _____

I go to bed at: _____

Before bed, I always: _____

How I sleep: *(pillows, socks, blankets)* _____

I sleep _____ hours per night.

I get up _____ times per night.

Comments: _____

'Getting to Know Me' – My Routines (page 2 of 2)

Review this page every few months for accuracy.



Date: _____

I visit the: hairdresser barber How often? _____

Other services I use are: (*footcare, manicure*) _____

I never miss...

_____ on the television.

_____ on the radio.

_____ in my community.

Other things I never miss: _____

I never leave the house without: _____
