

***Dining with Dementia***  
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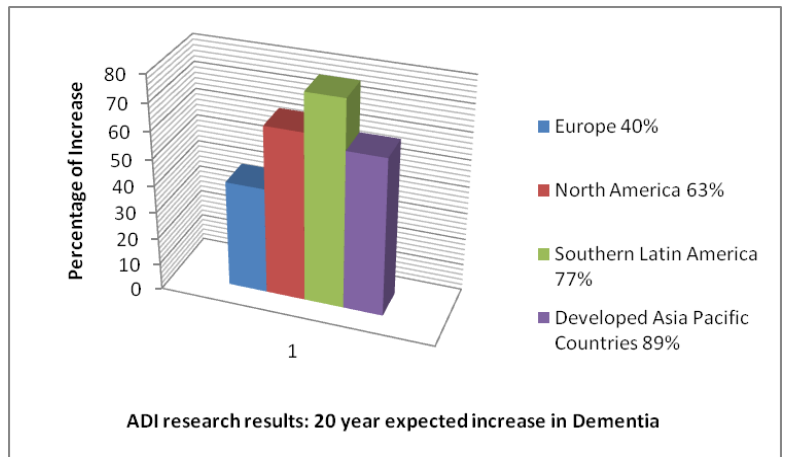
Researchers predict (1) that the number of people with dementia will double every 20 years across the globe. The latest research published by Alzheimer's Disease International (ADI) shows that over the next 20 years the number of people with dementia is expected to increase by:

40% in Europe (44% in Western Europe)

63% in North America

77% in southern Latin America

89% in developed Asia Pacific countries



Long Term Care Magazine (2) sites a report from the 2009 World Alzheimer's Report (3) that states: 35 million people worldwide are living with Alzheimer's and dementia (a 10% increase since 2005). With numbers like these, healthcare workers across the globe will be affected especially in long term care.

The Alzheimer's Association (4) is a valuable resource when working with this particular population.

The biggest challenges that Dietary Managers will face when working with residents that have dementia are: loss of appetite, weight loss, and meal times.

Regular nutritious meals may become a challenge in this population. There are several things to ask yourself when observing your residents with dementia. You may discover by your very own observation the answers to most of your questions regarding dementia and dining.

Here are some "Dining with Dementia" tips to consider:

- ✓ Set up regular mealtimes and stick with it.
- ✓ Limit distractions (keep radio either off or lower volume); keep talking to a minimum.
- ✓ Avoid asking too many questions.
- ✓ Keep table settings simple: none or very simple centerpieces; no table cloth; avoid too many patterns on dishes and place mats; use solid colors if possible with plates and décor.





- ✓ *Check food temperature as this population may not be able to distinguish hot vs. cold.*
- ✓ *Serve only 1 or 2 foods at a time; avoid putting all foods in front of them at one time.*
- ✓ *Food preferences may change daily*
- ✓ *Be cautious with foods that may be a choking hazard.*
- ✓ *Consider getting plates with suction cups and no- spill glasses. There will be messes; but do not focus on neatness.*
- ✓ *Speak slowly and clearly, use simple easy to understand instructions such as "Pick up your fork. Put some food on it. Raise it to your mouth."*

#### *References:*

- 1) *Researchers predict*  
<http://www.alz.co.uk/research/worldreport/>
- 2) *Long Term Care Magazine*  
<http://www.ltlmagazine.com/ME2/dirmod.asp?sid=9B6FFC446FF7486981EA3C0C3CCE4943&nm=Articles/News&type=news&mod=News&mid=9A02E3B96F2A415ABC72CB5F516B4C10&tier=3&nid=EA3D325A26EB4C0A8B5239F623C25E3C>
- 3) *2009 World Alzheimer's Report*  
<http://www.alz.co.uk/research/worldreport/>
- 4) *Alzheimer's Association*  
<http://www.alz.org/index.asp>