

Food for thought

Food is an integral part of our lives. For some, certain foods will bring up memories and for others it's the way they connect with family and friends over a meal.

For someone living with dementia, food can change. It may taste different, and we may notice that they eat extremely sweet or salty foods. They may struggle to use different utensils, or their cooking may change.

For someone living with dementia and their support partner, food can sometimes be a challenge, so here are three ways we can adapt the way we think about food to support those living with dementia.

1. Change it up

People living with dementia may struggle to use a knife or fork. This could be a good time to introduce finger foods, such as sandwiches, to reduce the possibility of embarrassment and rather, comfortably use their hands.

2. It's not all about eating

Food isn't just about the act of sitting and eating, it can be much more. Involving your loved one living with dementia in the preparation of the cooking can be an opportunity to provide purpose and may bring up old memories of favourite meals and time spent cooking or baking. Meal times can also provide a moment to engage and connect with your loved one living with dementia, while sitting around the table and sharing a meal.



3. Eating with your eyes first

Food isn't all about the taste. It's about what it looks like and how it smells.

When cooking a meal for someone living with dementia, we should think about what the meal looks like. Food with lots of contrasting colors may be more inviting. This may also help with depth perception and eyesight changes. Preparing food with familiar smells, such as your loved one's favourite meal, may also help prompt appetite.

Let's start thinking about food a little differently.



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