

alzheimer's association®

central & north florida chapter

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ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION® PROVIDES A 24/7 HELPLINE ALL YEAR –
Especially during holidays when travel, traditions and visits with loved ones can be difficult and stressful

Jacksonville, Florida – December 17, 2013 – The Alzheimer's Association, Central and North Florida Chapter wants to remind caregivers, patients, health care professionals and the general public that the organization provides a very important and much needed service all year, but especially during the holidays. We offer a 24/7 Helpline where a highly trained and knowledgeable staff member will always be at the other end of the line, day or night.

For most families, holidays are filled with togetherness, sharing, laughter and memories. But holidays can also be stressful and disappointing. During these times, families dealing with memory loss, dementia and Alzheimer's disease can experience problems during their holiday experience. Caregivers may feel overwhelmed maintaining holiday traditions while caring for their loved ones. The Alzheimer's Association recognizes the anxiety that comes for patients and caregivers at any time of year, and most especially now. The 24/7 Helpline is free, and offers a dedicated, trained person with every call. If you notice changes in your loved one during a holiday visit, the Helpline is also an important step to getting help.

The Helpline features: (1) confidential care consultation provided by master's level clinicians who can provide decision-making support, crisis assistance and education on issues families are facing; (2) help in a caller's preferred language using our translation service that features over 170 languages and dialects and (3) referrals to local community programs, services and ongoing support.

THE HELPLINE TOLL FREE NUMBER IS: 1.800.272.3900 or our TDD for deaf callers is: 1.866.403.3073

24 hours a day, seven days a week, 352 days a year, the Alzheimer's Association provides reliable information and support to all those who need assistance. "The Helpline is one of the more vital services we offer," says CEO Kay Redington. "There is always a person available on the other end of the line who understands the situation, is highly trained, and is ready to help. During the holidays, we know how important this can be for caregivers, patients and their families."

The Alzheimer's Association also offers these special, holiday tips from our Helpline staff:

- Decide which traditions are most important to you and which you can live without. Think about ways you can modify traditions that will still have meaning to you and your family.
- Remember family members and friends who've offered their assistance. Let them help with cleaning, addressing cards and shopping. Skip the holiday cards if you can't get to them!
- Attend less crowded religious services or create a quiet ceremony at home that includes traditional readings, stories and hymns.

- Simplify decorating. It is not only time consuming but can be confusing (blinking lights) and sometimes unsafe (wires, cords, candles). Instead, you might plan an outing to look at holiday lights and decorations.
- Consider gift cards and online shopping in lieu of crowded stores.
- Recognize that it is easy to feel overwhelmed by increased pressure and stimulation. Consider more intimate gatherings spread out over several days versus a large family get-together.
- By adjusting your expectations and modifying some traditions, you may find the real joy in the season comes from simply being with, and reminiscing with, the ones we love.

For local programs and services in your area, visit www.alz.org/cnfl.

About the Alzheimer's Association®

The Alzheimer's Association is the world's leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research, to provide and enhance care and support for all affected, and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's.

Visit www.alz.org® or call 800.272.3900.

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