

MEDICATIONS

Many people with dementia have been on long term medications to slow the progression or help with cognitive decline

Common medications prescribed for dementia include:



- > Aricept(Donepezil), Exelon (Rivastigmine), Namenda (Memantine), Razadyne (Galantamine)
- > **These medications can have significant side effects:**
 - > Excessive slowing of heart rate, lowering of blood pressure
 - > Increased issues with digestive tract: nausea, decreased appetite, weight loss, altered bowel movements. All of which are likely frequent problems at this time
 - > Sleep disturbance

There is good reason to consider stopping these medications:



- They were started early in the course of dementia to help with cognitive function
- At the time hospice care has been chosen, the dementia has reached its end stage and these medications are very unlikely to be of help
- As the dementia worsens and overall condition and health decline, these medications can be causing harm (as outlined above)
- The purpose of hospice treatment is to maximize comfort at the end of life, and these medications are likely not helping to achieve this goal at this time



- It is worthwhile to speak with your Hospice Team about if and how to stop these medications
- Do not stop them abruptly. They need to be 'tapered' off over a couple of weeks