



Strategies to Manage and Prevent Delirium²¹

The following chart highlights strategies that caregivers can apply to prevent delirium in older adults.

Strategies to Manage and Prevent Delirium	
Stimulate the Mind	Promote daily socializing, reading, listening to music, brain games (crossword, puzzles, etc.), and friendly conversations about daily news and events.
Get Moving	Encourage the person to stay as active as their abilities allow (try for at least three times each day).
Promote Healthy Sleep	Use a bedtime routine or other technique that promotes a good night sleep (e.g. turn off electronics an hour before bed, put on soothing music, read a book, enjoy a sleep-tea, have a warm bath, make sure the room is cool, dark and comfortable).
Confirm Seeing and Hearing	Ensure a person has their hearing aids and glasses on (if needed) and that they are working properly.
Stay Hydrated	Provide fluids throughout the day to prevent dehydration.
Eat	Make food available throughout the day, and enjoy meal times together (if possible).
Take Medications as Prescribed	Keep an up-to-date medication list and tracking system. Use a chart or dosette box to organize medications. Blisterpacks can be obtained from your pharmacy with pills already organized. (See Medication Management for more information).
Ensure Regular Bowel Movements	One of the most common causes of delirium is constipation. Ensure the person is drinking fluids throughout the day, walking (at least three times a day), and having daily prunes or prune juice with breakfast. Try to establish a routine time for a bowel movement each day (often this can be after breakfast). A routine gentle laxative such as stool softener or one that helps the bowels to move may be helpful. Speak to a health care professional for if there is any difficulty having regular bowel movements.

²¹ Adapted from RGP of Toronto. (2018). SF7 Toolkit. Retrieved from: <https://www.rgptoronto.ca/resources/>