

TIPS FOR A MEANINGFUL VISIT

Whether you are returning to our facility after a long hiatus or visiting for the first time, we are excited to have you with us! Visits to skilled nursing facilities like The Laurels can be challenging at any time, even more so during a global pandemic. As federal and state agencies begin to relax restrictions on nursing home visitation, we wanted to provide some tips to help make visits with your loved one meaningful and satisfying.

1) Prepare for the visit ahead of time.

- Contact our facility to **schedule an appointment**.
- Review the Visitation Guidelines on our facility website (these can change frequently based on new guidance).
- If you have not done so, consider being tested for COVID-19 prior to visiting to protect your loved one and others in the facility.
- **Consider the time of day you visit.** Does your loved one need to stick to a schedule of meals or naps that can't be interrupted?
- **Please note:** Residents have the right to refuse to receive visitors and the facility staff must honor those wishes. If this occurs, facility staff will attempt to connect you with your loved one by offering a window visit or a live video/phone call.



2) Keep the conversation positive and light.

- Tell your loved one how good it is to see them, how much you've missed them and how much you've thought of them. Just hearing your voice will bring comfort.
- Keep the visit social and **avoid stressful topics**.
- Talk about events going on in the community or family.
- **Reminisce** about happy times, such as previous holidays, special milestones or past experiences together.
 - If your loved one has any cognitive impairment, don't press them too much about people or past experiences if they don't remember.
- Remind your loved one of things or events they can look forward to (birthdays, weddings, graduations, etc.).
- **Be aware of who's steering the conversation.** If your loved one is excited to talk to you, let them lead the conversation. Alternatively, if they're quiet or withdrawn, you can lead the conversation, sharing positive experiences and thoughts.



TIPS FOR A MEANINGFUL VISIT

3) How Do You Decide What to Do?

- **Take cues from your loved one and let them guide the visit.**
Remember, the visit is about them and their needs.
- Bring items of interest with you. For example; if your loved one has a love of crossword puzzles, bring the daily crossword with you.
- Listen to your loved one's favorite music or watch their favorite television program.
- Read a book or the newspaper together.
- Make a video call to another family member or friend.
- Play a virtual game on an iPad or enjoy a card or board game.
- Share a scrapbook or photo album.
- Bring a video of family events such as weddings, graduations, baseball games and dance recitals, or share a video with them of a movie you enjoyed.
- Begin a project you can work on together each time you visit.



4) As You Leave

- Make a "soft" exit. It can be hard to leave when your visiting time is over. Consider coordinating your visit with an upcoming activity, such as a nap or lunch.
- **Schedule another visit soon!** Having an eye on something to look forward to in the future brings purpose and can help your loved one through tough times.
 - Visiting once and not returning often does more harm than good.
- To ensure smooth and timely functioning of the visitation process, please do not engage facility staff with questions or concerns during your visit. If you have feedback to share, please complete your visit and address in an email or telephone call to the facility administrator.

