

# THE CONVALESCENT HOME LIFE



*Caring Hearts...Caring Hands...Caring Home... Winter/Seasonal 2022... Volume V*

## Creating a Meaningful Christmas

Christmas in a personal care home will be different from past experiences, especially if this is your first Christmas in a PCH.

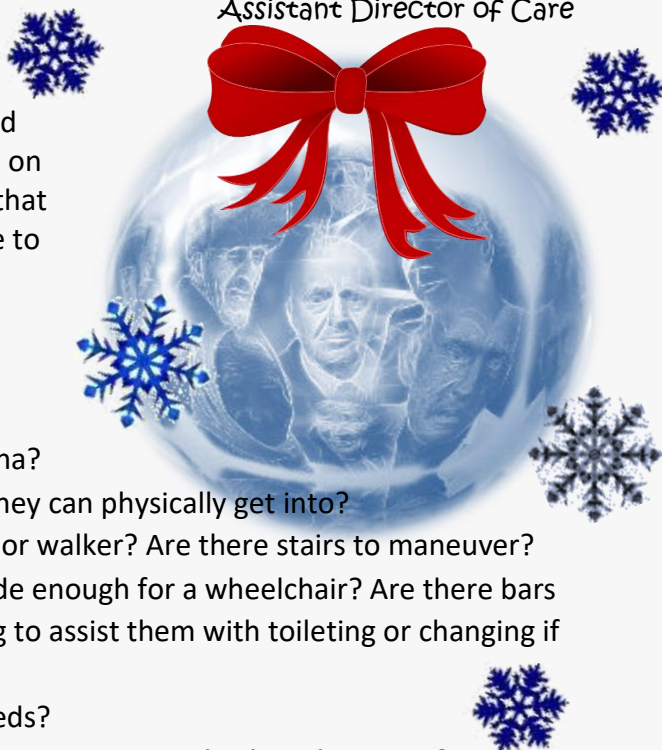
Older adults have many personal preferences. So, take the suggestions here and adapt them to your loved one's needs and desires remembering that this specific visit or occasion focuses on their enjoyment, capabilities, and comfort. Also, keep in mind that their condition may change from day to day, and you may have to adjust your plans. Hold plans loosely, be flexible and make it a meaningful occasion for your loved one.

### ***To stay in the Home or take them out?***

Great question! Here are a few points for you to consider:

- Can they manage going out? How is their health? Stamina?
- Can you manage the transport? Do you have a vehicle they can physically get into? Can your vehicle and home accommodate a wheelchair or walker? Are there stairs to maneuver?
- The bathroom may be another issue. Is the doorway wide enough for a wheelchair? Are there bars available to aid them? Is there anyone capable or willing to assist them with toileting or changing if required?
- Can you accommodate their dietary restrictions and needs?
- Will going out cause them too much stress and/or to not want to come back to the Home?

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If you do decide to take them out, **planning is essential.** Please communicate with the nurse on the floor at least a couple of days before the date and on the date. Time of pick up and return are necessary. Should they wear a special outfit? Remember, if required, to take their scheduled medications and incontinent products with you.

### ***Tips for a meaningful holiday visit with your loved one***

- Pick a time that is convenient for them. Short visits are fine as they may still want their nap 😊.
- **Reminisce** about humorous stories you both share. **Bring old photos.** Be prepared to listen.
- Music brings joy to many older adults. Sing with them and/or play their favorite Christmas music.
- Sharing favorite Christmas snacks is always a hit (at this time, in the Home, only the Resident may indulge due to the mask restrictions).



# ...a Meaningful Christmas (cont'd.)

## *Tips for a meaningful holiday visit with your loved one (cont'd.)*

- Bring the children and watch their eyes light up!
- Remember hand holding, hugs, and snuggles are appropriate and appreciated.

## *The Best Gifts Ever!*

- **NOT** electronics. Most older adults struggle with electronic equipment and require ++ assistance from staff who are unable to provide it.
- Clothing (soft, washable, easy on-off).
- Cozy socks and slippers (rubber soled with heel backs).
- Weighted blankets (great for anxiety and restlessness, must be laundered by family), and **photo blankets**.
- **Filled photo albums, custom photo calendars, a cork board with meaningful pictures, magazines, picture books.**
- Favorite lotions and powders.



Ensure that all items are given to the nurse for labelling.

**Orchestrating a meaningful Christmas for an older adult need not be a daunting task. Keep it simple, focus on your loved one's preferences, and HAVE FUN!**

Sources and further resources:

<https://alzheimer.ca/en/help-support/i-have-friend-or-family-member-who-lives-dementia/making-meaningful-visits>

<https://dailycaring.com/weighted-blankets-in-dementia-care-reduce-anxiety-and-improve-sleep/>

<https://www.seniorservicesofamerica.com/blog/gifts-for-dementia-patients-in-every-stage>

