

FIDGET MATS

During later phases of Alzheimer's disease—a form of dementia, patients' hands may "fidget" as though they are agitated or looking for something to do. Fidget mats provide visual and tactile input, help with motor skills, and provide the opportunity for reminiscence. The mats become the focus for a patient who may be scratching his/her skin, nails, gums, hair, or are very anxious.

Fidget mats are given to one patient only, we do not reuse or recycle, hence the need to always keep our inventory fluid. Volunteers bring the mats at each visit to a facility; they are not left with the patients, for reasons of safety.

An additional safety measure—**do not use items smaller than 1.75 inches in diameter. They pose a choking danger.**

All items must be machine-stitched on; hand-sewing not secure.

For items difficult to stitch thru, make a loop with the elastic, and stitch that onto mat.

We like to attach **5 items** (size of items and space, dependent) with **different tactile properties**-try to not use more than 1 kind of "feel" on each mat. And try to add 1 auditory item—measuring spoons are great for this.

Think:

- Furry
- Scratchy
- Zippy
- Crinkly
- Rough
- Bumpy
- Smooth
- Clickity
- Ropey, dangly

Place mats:

- use ones with a bit of body—floppy ones don't work well—toss 'em.
- Solid color is best; toss any that are patterned or tired-looking
- Used are OK, only if they look like new

Add:

- Zippers
- Small stuffed animals—stitch tails on
- Furry/fluffy items
- Plastic loofas
- Kitchen scrubber
- Garden gloves—thumbs down! One glove/mat

- Men's ties
- Different textured fabrics; With the larger **microfiber mitts and fluffy fabric, please cut into multiple pieces, approx. 4x4**
- Small pet collars, belts, sewn on with a loop.
- Cuffs or collars from shirts
- Textured pot holders
- Measuring spoons—split a set between 2 mats
- Ribbons to tie
- If using a zippered case-- add an item inside, but put it on a leash so it doesn't get lost.
- Use elastic to attach non-sewable items to the mat.

Be creative, but for the most part, **use new items.**

We trust your discretion –if you think a mat or an item looks used, toss it. We want to be proud to offer the best to our patients!

THANK YOU!



