

Fidget Mats and Twiddle Muffs Volunteer Info and Guidelines

Fidget Mats are crocheted, knitted or quilted mats using multiple textures with interesting items and accessories attached.

Twiddle Muffs are reversible tubes that are knitted, crocheted or made of a soft material fabric. They are multi-textured designs with accessories attached on both sides.

These items have been found to help patients with dementia, Alzheimer's and brain trauma. The mats and muffs help calm patients and reduce their anxiety while filling their time by promoting movement, brain stimulation and flexibility.

To prevent infections, the mats and muffs are intended for one-time use and will stay with the patient who receives the item.

Much thought and discussion with hospital care providers has been put into what items and techniques work the best when making these mats and muffs.

Suggested size range:

Mats: rectangle width 14" to 18" by length 20" to 24" - square as much as 24" by 24" Small mats do not work well. Mats can be double or single layered but must be thick for stability.

Muffs: width 7" to 8" by length 10" to 11" - muffs that are too wide do not work. Muffs are double-layered – you make an outside muff and an inside muff which are then put together, with both sides having attached items.

Safety Guidelines:

- No sharp, heavy or hard objects are used - all attachments are sewn securely for safety.
- All materials must withstand strong tugs, pulls and fidgets.
- All materials must be washable.
- No strings over six (6) inches are recommended as they are a choking hazard
- Buttons are to be flat and sewn-on thru holes in the center
- No wooded or plastic shaped buttons that can break easily

General Guidelines:

- Fabric mats to be double thickness (quilted is ideal).
- Yarn is double-stranded or chunky/ bulky weight yarn.
- Contrasting colors are fun and excellent for sight issues.
- Complementary and soft colors are excellent for calmness.
- Too much color and 'stuff' may be overwhelming.



- Textures can be made in many different ways:
 - using different stitches as you knit or crochet
 - changing yarn texture or color
 - using different types of fabric
 - adding lace, ribbon, twine, rick rack
 - adding pockets, Velcro flaps, zippers, pom-poms, beads, braids or things to lace
- Appliqué is fun whether fabric or yarn is used. A theme that would give the caretaker something to talk about with the patient is helpful, such as farming or fishing, flowers in a garden, pets, animals, outer space, or golfing.
- Flaps and pockets are stimulating. Hiding something under a flap or tucking something into pockets can be stimulating.
- Designing a task with buttons to do and undo helps keep a patient occupied.

Please make sure everything is securely attached or sewn.

Items are needed for a variety of patients with a variety of interests – female, male, gender neutral, young and old. While these are primarily needed for dementia and Alzheimer patients, they are also useful for patients who may be confused, need to keep their hands busy or are just in need of a general comfort item.

Creativity is the name of the game – if you enjoy making it then someone is going to love fidgeting and twiddling with it! Let your imagination have some fun!

There is a Facebook group and Pinterest Board: "[Fidget Mat Guild of Treasure Valley](#)" with ideas that meet our criteria.