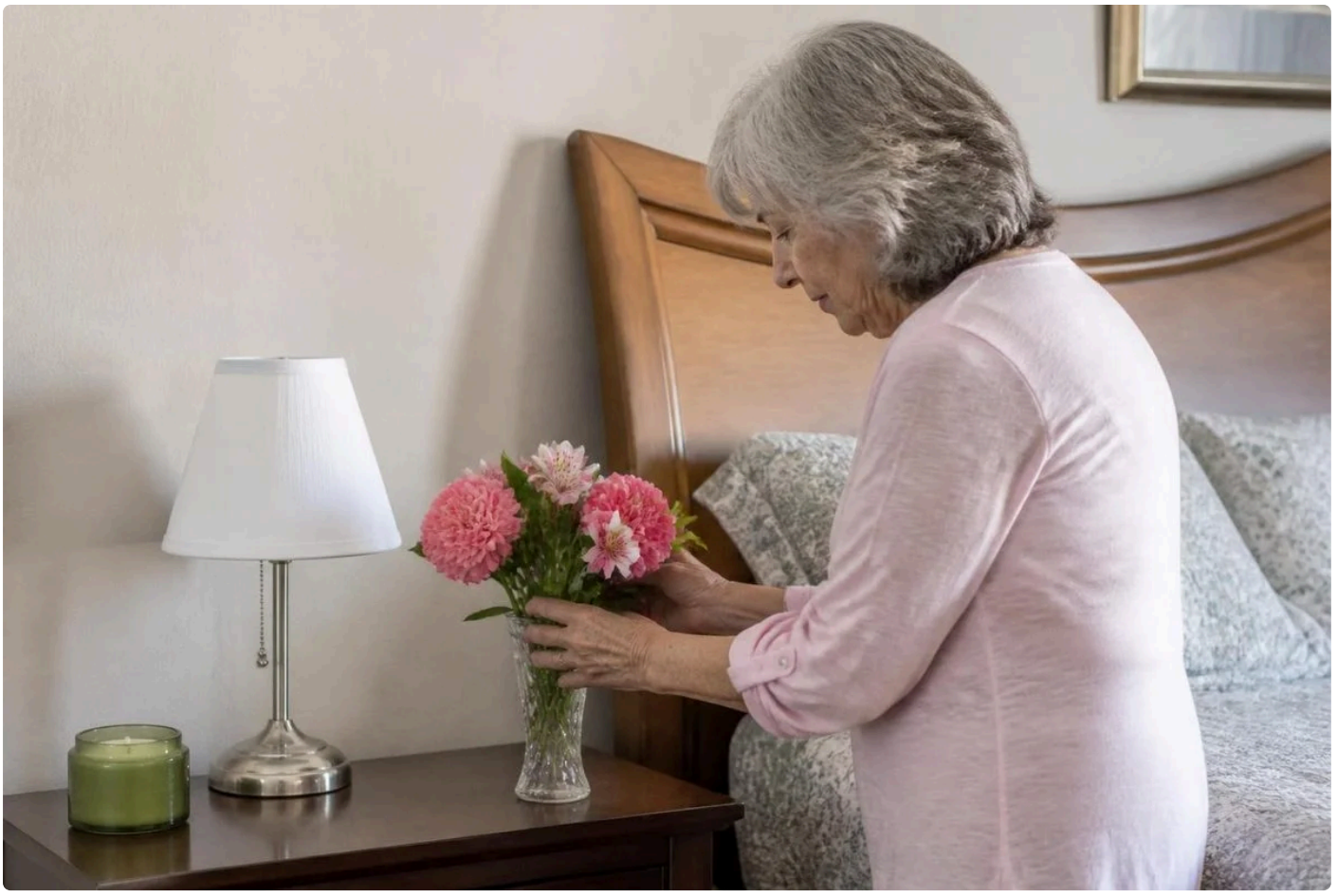

Chrysanthemums, carnations, alstroemeria and cut orchids are among the longest lasting flowers for a get well arrangement. With fresh water and a little care, many can look good for a week or two, and sometimes longer.

Flowers that go the distance

Flower life depends on freshness, room temperature and care, so no stem comes with a guarantee. These varieties are useful choices when you want an arrangement that will still look cheerful after the first few days.

- **Chrysanthemums:** These sturdy flowers often last two weeks or more. They come in many colours and shapes, from small button blooms to larger, rounded flowers.
- **Carnations:** Fresh carnations can last around two weeks in a vase. Their ruffled petals add texture, and their firm stems hold up well in mixed arrangements.
- **Alstroemeria:** Also called Peruvian lilies, these flowers often last one to two weeks. Several buds grow on each stem, so new blooms may open as older ones fade.
- **Cut orchids:** Some cut orchids can last two weeks or longer. A few stems make an arrangement feel special without taking up much room.

Choose flowers with firm stems and healthy leaves. Some open blooms give the recipient something to enjoy straight away, while a few buds can extend the display. Avoid bunches with slimy stems or petals that are already browning.

Make the arrangement easy to live with

A compact vase is often more useful than a grand display. It is easier to place on a bedside table, and there is less chance of someone having to move it every time a glass of water or a book needs a home.

Keep scent in mind, too. A person who is resting or feeling unwell may prefer flowers with little fragrance. Carnations, chrysanthemums and alstroemeria are generally less strongly scented than many lilies, though fragrance can vary by variety.

If the recipient is in hospital, check the ward rules before sending flowers. Some areas do not allow them, and space may be limited. Ask about allergies as well, if you can. At home, consider pets: lilies are especially dangerous to cats, and other flowers can also be harmful if eaten. Keep arrangements out of reach and check individual varieties before choosing.

Help the flowers last

Use a clean vase and fresh water. Remove any leaves that would sit below the waterline, since they can decay in the vase. Trim the stems before arranging them, and follow the directions if flower food is supplied.

Change the water regularly and trim the stems again when needed. Keep the vase away from direct sun, heaters and ripening fruit. Remove faded flowers as they appear, so the remaining stems have room to look their best.

If the recipient is not up for flower care, offer to refresh the water yourself. A small arrangement of sturdy blooms can bring colour to the room without becoming another job on the bedside table.

Worth a look: business flowers etiquette