



The Alzheimer's Update

A Local Organization Helping Local Families

Fall 2018

10 Tested Ways to Avoid Care Refusals



Alzheimer's of
Central Alabama



1 Encourage self-care... no matter how long it takes!

Prevent care refusals and resistance by encouraging the person with dementia to perform as much of their own care as is safely possible. If you start taking over and "doing for" your family member, the person may forget how to do that activity. By encouraging the person with dementia to remain active and perform as much self-care and other activities as possible, you keep the memories "alive." This will help foster a sense of accomplishment. The desire to be useful and to have a purpose does not go away, but the outlets for this drive and desire diminish as the dementia gets worse.

2 Schedules and Routines

Schedules and routines go hand-in-hand with self-care. Think about your own schedules and routines. Following a regular routine serves as a type of reminder so that you remember everything you need for the day. A routine helps to support memory and function in people with dementia. Familiar schedules and routines are comforting in a world where things can be confusing. One family had trouble getting mom to take a bath. They began giving her a bath in the evening and entered her reality by telling her that everyone was bathing "before church tomorrow."

3 Overall Approach

If your family member needs help with some activity, your overall approach sets the tone. Make sure you have given yourself and your loved one enough time to complete the activity. Come at or below eye level in an unhurried way. Smile. It also helps to have the area set up for whatever activity you plan to do, like running the bath water and setting out all the necessary supplies before you mention bath time.

4 Chaining

Chaining is starting the activity and having the person with dementia finish the activity. Button the top button and then see if they can follow through with the rest.

5 Avoid Elderspeak (baby talk)

Sometimes, the person with dementia may act in a child-like manner. Whatever you do, never talk to the person like he or she is a child. The person with dementia may forget a great deal about him or herself, but these folks will never forget that they are adults. Some caregivers forget themselves and start to use sing-song baby talk. This type of speech is called "elderspeak" and it will make refusals worse.

6 Use the Environment to Trigger Memories

For people with dementia, memories are lost in the reverse order in which they are made. You can use the environment to "pull up" a deep memory. This is called "priming." For instance, some caregivers try to be efficient and attempt to brush their loved ones' teeth in the shower or while the person is sitting on the toilet. Instead, use the environment in a way that makes sense. If you are trying to get your family member to brush their teeth, for example, help him or her to sit/stand in front of the sink and start the water running.

7 Short 1-step Commands

As dementia worsens, people with the disease have trouble keeping up with long sentences or explanations. You will have more success with using short, 1-step respectful commands/requests or, in some cases, more gestures and pantomime and fewer words. While you are using gestures and pantomime, try to keep smiling and a calm manner.

8 Moving Backwards in Time/Entering Their Reality

Sometimes people with dementia literally move backwards in time. Also, time starts to lose its structure. Your family member may tell you, "I've already had breakfast." Instead of arguing with your family member, or using logic by pointing out the time, simply go along with it. Say, "Oh, OK. I'm going to make myself some toast because I'm still hungry." Then, make the breakfast

and serve it to your family member. If your loved one persists with, "I already ate," you can respond with, "OK, I made some extra and I don't want it to go to waste."

9 Ask for Help

All of us want to be needed and to have a job or purpose. Using the breakfast example, you could say, "I made extra. Don't want the food to be wasted. Can you help me?" Arguing and logic do not work. It will simply make the situation worse.

10 Watch your "Vibes"

Ever hear of "emotional contagion?" It is the spread of some emotion from one person to another. Yes, just like spreading a cold. There are people who brighten a room just by walking into it. Then there are others who brighten up a room...as they go out the door! The human body has nerves whose only job is to "pick up" and send vibrations to the brain. So when someone says, "I don't get a good vibe about that person," this is not woo-hooey new age stuff but legit nerve activity.

After a rough day at work and heading to your "second shift," or after hearing "Where have you been?" for the 10 millionth time (and you have been RIGHT FREAKING HERE!!!), it can be a little hard to be chill and keep one's vibes "in check." So, go ahead. Scream. Preferably outside or in a pillow or somewhere not likely to result in a phone call to the cops. Once I fix my vibes, I'm ready to go back and face the situation. This time out usually results in my loved one having a break (and hopefully forgetting that I was being a butt).

*Rita Jablonski, PhD, CRNP is a nurse practitioner, funded researcher, educator, and former family caregiver. She has authored over 60 publications and has an international reputation as an expert in the care of persons with dementia. Her blog, Make Dementia Your B*tch, offers creative solutions to dementia challenges.*



alzca.org



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Alzheimer's of Central Alabama



I love my
2018 hippocampus
Walking to Remember

Saturday, November 3,
Riverchase Galleria, 8 am
Ask family, friends, and coworkers
to walk in honor or memory
of a loved one
Register (205) 871-7970 or
www.alzca.org/walking

Alzheimer's Disease Prayer

Sunday, November 11, 2018, is the Day of Prayer for our loved ones, family members, providers, and all who seek better care and treatment.

Dear Lord,

For the many persons who have died from Alzheimer's Disease, we pray that they are in the care of your loving arms.

For those who are now Alzheimer's Disease patients, we pray for their dignity and comfort.

For those who are caregivers, we pray for understanding, compassion and patience.

For families touched by Alzheimer's Disease, we pray for strength and courage.

For those who seek the cause, cure, prevention, and treatment of Alzheimer's Disease, we pray for your wisdom, guidance, and direction.

What a solace it is to know that You know our heartaches and our frustrations, our joys at those moments of clarity and recognition, and our anticipation of medical discoveries. But, most importantly, each of us receives peace from awareness that Your eye is on us and that it is Your hand that gently soothes us and is extended to uplift us.

For being our refuge and for the Hope You have given us...Our Thanks.

Amen

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Why Support Walking to Remember

Almost 30 years ago, local family and support group members joined to create Alzheimer's of Central Alabama (ACA) to promote research and provide services for local families living with dementia in its many forms. The heart of what we do is help families keep their loved one at home.

Through ACA's programs, education, and services we seek to help diminish the devastating affects a diagnosis of Alzheimer's or dementia can cause for an entire family. While research gives hope for the future, ACA's services give actual help now, with relief to specific challenges families face as their loved one progresses from needing supervision to custodial care to nursing care.

ACA is here to help!

Project Lifesaver Bracelets for patients at risk of wandering. The bracelet emits a radio tracking signal to help local law enforcement locate a patient who has wandered. 60% of

The statistics are staggering:

- Every 3 seconds someone develops dementia worldwide.
- Every 65 seconds someone in the U.S. develops dementia.
- Over 90,000 individuals in Alabama are living with dementia.
- They are cared for by 303,000 unpaid family caregivers.

patients are at risk for wandering, making it the most dangerous dementia behavior.

Respite Care Scholarships for patients to attend an adult day care center. This year over 59,900 hours of care will be provided for 104 people living with Alzheimer's.

Continence Products delivered to the home each month. Continence products are a medical necessity but for many families purchasing the products they need is a luxury.

This year ACA will provide 105,840 products to families in need.

Supporting Arts Programming for those living with dementia: visit ACA's website for more information about our annual calendar of dementia art.

Education is a family's first line of defense when faced with a dementia diagnosis:

Call our helpline, visit our website, or attend a support group or a community education program. Contact us at aca@alzca.org and ask to receive our weekly Dementia Community Calendar.

Alzheimer's Research—ACA has funded 24 research grants and has established the Alzheimer's of Central Alabama Pre-Doctoral Scholars Program for Alzheimer's disease research at UAB.

100% of the Money Raised Stays in Alabama to Help Alabama Families

