



Handling Troubling Behavior

Check with your doctor.

- Behavioral problems may have an underlying medical reason, such as pain or an adverse reaction to a medication.
- In some cases, medication can assist with certain behavioral problems (e.g., hallucinations, incontinence).

Don't try to change your loved one.

- Try to accommodate your loved one's behavior rather than controlling it. For example, if your loved one insists on sleeping on the floor, place a mattress on the floor to make him/her more comfortable.
- Work on trying to change your response to your loved one's behavior. For example, if your loved one is confused by a fact, instead of offering a correction, ask your loved one to talk more about it.

Behavior has a purpose.

- Always consider what need your loved one might be trying to meet with his/her behavior. When possible, try to accommodate the need.

Behavior is triggered.

- Work to identify what triggers (e.g., verbal, physical, environmental) affect your loved one negatively and find ways to modify or avoid them.

What works today may not work tomorrow.

- The key to managing difficult behaviors is being creative and flexible in your approach to a given issue, particularly given the fact that dementia is a progressive disease.