



Pocket Reference of
**TIPS AND
STRATEGIES**



Pacing

- ✚ Walk with her.
- ✚ Hold her hand.
- ✚ Tell her she is safe and loved.
- ✚ Offer her a snack she can carry in her hand as she walks.
- ✚ Keep the walkway clear so she is safe from falling.
- ✚ Try to distract her from her pacing. Ask her to look at a magazine or work a puzzle with you.

Late Afternoon Behavior

Fidgeting and acting nervous, becoming easily upset, and wanting to go “home” when she is ready to go home are types of late afternoon behavior.

- ✚ Give her a hug.
- ✚ Tell her where she is.
- ✚ Tell her she is safe.
- ✚ Tell her you are not leaving.
- ✚ Change the topic.
- ✚ Turn on more lights.
- ✚ Close the blinds or curtains.
- ✚ Ask if she is hungry or if she will help you in the kitchen.
- ✚ Offer an easy activity like sorting spoons or forks or ask her to wipe off the table with you.

Refusing Care

- ✚ Keep a daily routine.
- ✚ Don't ask "Do you want to...bathe, brush your teeth or get dressed?" unless "no" is an OK answer for you. Tell her it is time for the care activity.
- ✚ Have all supplies ready before you start an activity.
- ✚ Explain to her, in simple terms, what you will be doing.
- ✚ Make sure her refusal is not because she is afraid or does not understand what you are asking her to do.
- ✚ If she begins to fight you, step away. Try again later.

Using the Bathroom

- ✚ Mark the bathroom clearly.
- ✚ Use a sign that has the word "bathroom" written on it.
- ✚ Put a picture of a toilet on the door.
- ✚ Watch for cues like fidgeting with clothing or pacing.
- ✚ Write down the time of day that toilet accidents happen to better predict future accidents.
- ✚ Walk with her to the bathroom every 2 or 3 hours. Don't make a big deal out of it. Don't wait for her to ask.
- ✚ Carry extra toileting supplies with you when you are away from home.

Home Safety

- ✚ Try to make her world simple.
- ✚ Use plain-colored placemats, tablecloths, bath towels and sheets.
- ✚ Block off stairs so she can't fall up or down them.
- ✚ Have all your house locks keyed to the same key.
- ✚ Place safety latches up high and down low on doors leading to the outside.
- ✚ Have her wear an ID bracelet if she wanders, and sign her up for the Alzheimer Association's Safe Return® Program.
- ✚ Use locked cabinets for soaps, cleaners, poisons and medicines.

Dressing

- ✚ Allow twice the amount of time you think it will take for her to get dressed.
- ✚ Don't act rushed or in a hurry.
- ✚ Limit her choices to two outfits. Let her pick which one she wants to wear.
- ✚ Lay her clothes out in the order she needs to put them on.
- ✚ Talk her through getting dressed.
- ✚ Use short, simple, one-step commands.
- ✚ If she loves one outfit and refuses to wear anything else, buy several outfits that look just like it.
- ✚ Use pants with elastic waists and pullover tops to make dressing easier.

Wandering

- ✚ Make sure that she wears a medical ID bracelet.
- ✚ Keep a recent photograph of her to help police if she should become lost.
- ✚ Keep all of the doors locked.
- ✚ Consider installing a keyed deadbolt.
- ✚ Place safety up high and down low on doors.
- ✚ Enroll her in the Alzheimer's Association Safe Return[®] Program.
- ✚ Make sure she gets enough exercise and sleep.
- ✚ Let her do chores, such as folding clothes or helping with dinner.
- ✚ Place cloth of the same color over doorknobs, or paint doorknobs and doors the same color as the walls.

Communication

- ❏ Pay attention to what she is trying to tell you.
- ❏ Keep what you are telling her short and simple but not child-like.
- ❏ Use one-step commands when telling her what you want her to do. This will decrease her frustration level and make each activity a success for her.
- ❏ Don't tell her more than needs to know at one time.
- ❏ Be patient. Give her lots of time to answer your question.
- ❏ If she loses the thought, ask the same question again.
- ❏ Give her lots of time to finish what she is trying to say.
- ❏ Don't argue with her. It is easier to agree with her and then do what you had planned anyway.
- ❏ Don't try to reason with her. You will just get angry and she won't know why. Change what you're talking about to something she likes.
- ❏ Don't correct or fuss at her for getting something wrong. Does it really matter? It may only make her feel bad.
- ❏ Don't say "I just told you that." Just repeat the answer you have already given to her.
- ❏ Don't ask her to "remember" things that happened in the past. Talk about what you remember happening and how she was a part of it.
- ❏ Don't say "You can't." Say "Do as much as you can and I will help you."
- ❏ Don't demand things from her. Always show her what you want her to do.

In the Car

- ✚ Keep the car keys out of sight.
- ✚ Tell her where you are going as you leave the house.
- ✚ If she wants to know why she can't drive, tell her the doctor or the insurance company said she could not drive anymore.
- ✚ Open the car door for her.
- ✚ Help her put on her seat belt.
- ✚ Tell her each car's seat belt is different if she is having trouble putting it on.
- ✚ Use the child safety lock feature on the car doors so she is not able to unlock the car door from the inside.
- ✚ Make trips in the car to places she likes to go as well as places she has to go.
- ✚ In the later stages of AD, having her sit in the back seat is safer and less scary for her.
- ✚ If she refuses to get out of the car when you get where you are going, don't argue with her. Drive around the block and try again.
- ✚ If she refuses to get out of the car at an Adult Day Care Center, call ahead and ask a staff member to meet you in the parking lot or at the door.
- ✚ If she refuses to get out of the car at home and someone else is there, ask them to meet you at the door and invite her in.

Eating

- ✚ **Serve meals at the same time every day.**
- ✚ **Serve foods with different colors and textures.**
- ✚ **Make the table a calm place to eat.**
- ✚ **Use plain-colored dishes with no pattern to set off the color of the food on the plate so she can see the food.**
- ✚ **Use a shallow bowl with a lip on it if she keeps pushing her food off the plate.**
- ✚ **Put only the knife, fork or spoon she needs to eat with next to her plate.**

If she refuses to eat, it may be because:

- ✚ **She has too many choices on her plate. Try offering one food item at a time.**
- ✚ **She may not know how to get started. Show her the act of eating.**

Survival Tips

- ✚ Put staying healthy at the top of your list.
- ✚ Have a backup plan in case something unexpected happens to you.
- ✚ Take one day at a time.
- ✚ Keep your sense of humor.
- ✚ Pat yourself on the back for the good job you are doing.
- ✚ Get enough rest and eat right.
- ✚ Make time for the things you like to do.
- ✚ Talk about how you feel with others.
- ✚ Listen to your friends.
- ✚ Make a list of all the things your loved one can still do.

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For additional Playbook copies and Alzheimer's disease information:



www.alz.org • 24-hour helpline
800-272-3900 (toll-free)
Playbook on the Web:
www.alzheimersplaybook.com

Arkansas Residents' Playbook Requests:
Barbara Broyles Legacy
1826 N. Crossover Rd., Ste. 1, PMB #104
Fayetteville, AR 72701
479-313-5079