

Alzheimer's – Resistance to Care

In Alzheimer's disease (AD), when a person seems to be refusing to cooperate with the activities of daily living such as dressing or bathing, you may think he is resisting care. Sometimes, when a person with Alzheimer's says "no" he may be *labeled* uncooperative.

People with AD may get upset when somebody touches them. You may be trying to do something to help him, but he doesn't understand what's going on. He may be feeling uncomfortable, powerless, frightened, tired, in pain, or confused. He cannot explain how he wants to be treated.

What to do? Try to put yourself in the shoes of the person with Alzheimer's disease and you may be able to avoid causing resistance. You may be able to change your approach to reduce these responses and actually be able to help the person to cooperate with you.

Tip

Think about what it would feel like to constantly be told to do something you may not feel like doing or cannot understand what is expected of you.

In order to provide good care you need to know how to respond to all the different ways in which the illness affects the person with dementia. This means that in many cases the person shows you with actions what can no longer be communicated in words. So behaviors are messages about ideas, feelings, and needs the person is telling you about in the best way he or she can.

Tip

The best thing you can do is always ask yourself, "What is he trying to say by doing this?"

Gentle Reminders

In the early stage of Alzheimer's disease you may simply need to remind the person to attend to his personal care needs. Some people with AD lose their former high standard of personal hygiene. This can be upsetting to the people around them. Sometimes this is because of his memory problems. For example, he may go into the bathroom to take a shower, forget why he is there, come back out, and when asked, say that he has showered. Remember, he is not lying, but saying what he thinks he is supposed to say or believes to be true. He may have forgotten whether or not he has showered and even get annoyed that you are questioning him. As always, don't argue. You can suggest later that he shower. As with all personal care activities, try to follow the person's usual routine.

Homecare is currently serving 15 families and employs 15 caregivers. Late fall and winter has been a busy time with people getting sick, hospital stays, and even death. Staff at CCH become attached to those we care for and the journey during the final stages of life are often difficult and emotion filled. We draw support from each other and from our heavenly father. The families are so grateful for our assistance and it is a privilege to be God's hands at work here on earth.

MAY YOU HAVE A HEALTHY HAPPY 2018!

