

December

Understanding the Behaviors Often Associated with Alzheimer's and Dementia

Part 4 of a 10 Part Series

Hallucinations & Alzheimer's

When a person with Alzheimer's or other dementia hallucinates, he or she may see, hear, smell, taste or feel something that isn't there. Some hallucinations may be frightening, while others may involve ordinary visions of people, situations or objects from the past.

- [Understanding hallucinations](#)
- [Coping strategies](#)



Understanding hallucinations

Hallucinations are false perceptions of objects or events involving the senses. These false perceptions are caused by changes within the brain that result from Alzheimer's, usually in the later stages of the disease. The person may see the face of a former friend in a curtain or may see insects crawling on his or her hand. In other cases, a person may hear someone talking and may even engage in conversation with the imagined person.

Alzheimer's and other dementias are not the only cause of hallucinations. Other causes include:

Hallucinations caused by progressive dementia usually occur during the later stages of the disease.

- Schizophrenia
- Physical problems, such as kidney or bladder infections, dehydration, intense pain, or alcohol or drug abuse
- Eyesight or hearing problems
- Medications

See the Doctor

If a person with Alzheimer's begins hallucinating, it's important to have a medical evaluation to rule out other possible causes and to determine if medication is needed. The first line of

treatment for the behavioral symptoms of Alzheimer's is [non-drug approaches](#), but if these strategies fail and symptoms are severe, medications may be appropriate. While antipsychotic medications can be effective in some situations, they are associated with an increased risk of stroke and death in older adults with dementia and must be used carefully. Work with the doctor to learn both the risks and benefits of medication before making a decision.

[Back to top](#)

Coping strategies

When responding to hallucinations, be cautious. First, assess the situation and determine whether the hallucination is a problem for the person or for you. Is the hallucination upsetting? Is it leading the person to do something dangerous? Is the sight of an unfamiliar face causing the person to become frightened? If so, react calmly and quickly with reassuring words and a comforting touch. Do not argue with the person about what he or she sees or hears. If the behavior is not dangerous, there may not be a need to intervene.

Offer reassurance

- Respond in a calm, supportive manner. You may want to respond with, "Don't worry. I'm here. I'll protect you. I'll take care of you."
- Gentle patting may turn the person's attention toward you and reduce the hallucination.
- Acknowledge the feelings behind the hallucination and try to find out what the hallucination means to the individual. You might want to say, "It sounds as if you're worried" or "I know this is frightening for you."

Sign up for our weekly e-newsletter

Receive information and coping tips on behaviors associated with Alzheimer's. Plus get updates on advances in Alzheimer's treatments, care and research. [Subscribe Now](#)

Use distractions

- Suggest a walk or move to another room. Frightening hallucinations often subside in well-lit areas where other people are present.
- Try to turn the person's attention to music, conversation or activities you enjoy together.

Modify the environment

- Check for sounds that might be misinterpreted, such as noise from a television or an air conditioner.
- Look for lighting that casts shadows, reflections or distortions on the surfaces of floors, walls and furniture. Turn on lights to reduce shadows.
- Cover mirrors with a cloth or remove them if the person thinks that he or she is looking at a stranger.

Information courtesy of: alz.org/care



Veteran's Day Pinning & Certificate Presentation at Casa Bella



*Veteran's Day
Celebrations*





Our Super Seniors, are a group of seniors who attend various outings throughout the month. Our outings vary from trips to the mall, local museums, zoo, botanical gardens, senior centers and movies just to name a few. Outings are scheduled in advance and based on space availability. If you are interested in your loved one being part of the Super Seniors Group, please contact Tracy at tayers.apal@gmail.com



Dessert of the Month Club!

Not only did we have some great desserts in November, but our staff put together a fabulous Thanksgiving luncheon for our residents, families and friends! Some locations had up to 30 guests and our staff worked so hard to make this a special day!

Family & Friends Thanksgiving Luncheons





The holidays bring about joy for so many, but loneliness and isolation for others. This is why Preferred Assisted Living joins in many community programs to help others to enjoy the holidays the way so many do. Below are just a few local projects that you can participate in to help someone in need this holiday season.



Home Instead Senior Care has Christmas Trees up at several local Wal-Mart stores. You simply pick an ornament off the tree, purchase the items listed on the ornament, bring the ornament and the gift back to the participating store for distribution to the seniors.

Operation Silent Night

Please help this Holiday...

by donating gently used or new blankets, sweaters, jackets, toys or treats for the pets that are spending the holidays at the Animal Welfare shelters as they wait to find forever homes.



On Christmas Eve, Santa's elves will distribute the donations to each animal at the shelters.

You can drop off your donations at the Animal Welfare Department shelters or go to our web site to find more drop off areas from Now till December 21.



Thank you for helping bring holiday joy to all pets at the Animal Welfare Department shelters.

Eastside Shelter
8920 Lomas Blvd. NE

Lucky Paws
in Coronado Mall
6600 Menaul NE

Westside Shelter
11800 Sunset Gardens SW



**for more information dial 311(TTY 711)
or visit our web site www.cabq.gov/pets**

artwork donated by

Gecko

505-239-5074





For detailed information including drop off locations and donation information, please visit their website at [Toys for Tots](http://www.toysfortots.org)

Happy Holidays



Christmas Friends & Family Luncheon

You Are Invited to Celebrate Christmas
With Your Loved One

Friday, December 19th

(Casa Bella Thursday, December 18th)

11:30am - 1:00pm

Please RSVP to the house manager by Friday,
December 12th



December Staff Training Topic

Resident Service Plans

Topics addressed in this month's training include Resident Service Plans. Successful resident care starts with individualizing services to the resident and having a plan in place. State regulations require that every resident in our facility have a current service plan on file. This video and learning module demonstrate effective service planning strategies, how to work with the family, the role of hospice and the physician, and licensing compliance.

We feel very strongly that your opinion matters and if there is a certain topic you would like to see our staff have additional training on, please feel free to contact Tracy at tayers.apal@gmail.com and she will be happy to organize this!



Christmas Food Court Flash Mob, Hallelujah Chorus - Must See!

Laughter
is the
BEST
medicine.

[Like us on Facebook](#)



**Preferred
Locations**

Specializing in Care for Dementia and Alzheimer's

Casa Bella - 15 Beds - 2919 Spitz St. Las Cruces
Casa Bella Independent Living - 2 Bedroom Independent Living Apartments - 2915 Spitz - Las Cruces
Casa del Norte - 8 Beds - 3200 Candlelight Dr., NE Albuquerque
Robin House - 10 Beds - 9909 Robin Ave. NE Albuquerque
Tender Heart - 14 Beds - 4308 Tulane Dr., NE Albuquerque
Vista Sandia - 8 Beds - 8604 Camino Osito, NE Albuquerque
West Ridge Village - 14 Beds - 3130 Vista Grande, NW Albuquerque
Willow Wood - 8 Beds - 1008 Chiricahua, SE, Albuquerque

To view photos of our homes and read more about us, visit us at:

[Preferred Assisted Living Website](#)

For Information on Availability or to Schedule a Personal Tour, Contact:

Chris Anaya - 505-884-3830 (Albuquerque)

canaya.apal@gmail.com

Jill Shannon - 575-642-8787 (Las Cruces)

jshannon.apal@gmail.com



www.apalinc.com

Like us on Facebook 