



Understanding the Behaviors Often Associated with Alzheimer's and Dementia

Part 1 of a 10 Part Series

Aggression and Anger

Aggressive behaviors may be verbal or physical. They can occur suddenly, with no apparent reason, or result from a frustrating situation. While aggression can be hard to cope with, understanding that the person with Alzheimer's or dementia is not acting this way on purpose can help.

Causes

Aggression can be caused by many factors including physical discomfort, environmental factors and poor communication. If the person with Alzheimer's is aggressive, consider what might be contributing to the change in behavior.

The main cause of behavioral symptoms associated with dementia is the [progressive deterioration of brain cells](#), but other factors - such as pain - also can cause symptoms or make symptoms worse.

Physical discomfort

- Is the person able to let you know that he or she is experiencing physical pain? It is not uncommon for persons with Alzheimer's or other dementias to have urinary tract or other infections. Due to their loss of cognitive function, they are unable to articulate or identify the cause of physical discomfort and, therefore, may express it through physical aggression.
- Is the person tired because of inadequate rest or sleep?
- Are medications causing side effects? Side effects are especially likely to occur when individuals are taking multiple medications for several health conditions?

Treating Behavioral Symptoms

Anyone experiencing behavioral symptoms should receive a thorough medical checkup, especially when symptoms appear suddenly. Treatment depends on a careful diagnosis, determining possible causes and the types of behavior the person is experiencing.

Learn more: [Treatments for Behavioral Symptoms](#)

Environmental factors



[Sudden change in behavior? UTI could be the cause.](#)

UTIs, or urinary tract infections, can cause changes in someone with Alzheimer's disease that you might never expect. The impact can be really profound. [Read more.](#)

- Is the person overstimulated by loud noises, an overactive environment or physical clutter? Large crowds or being surrounded by unfamiliar people - even within one's own home - can be over-stimulating for a person with dementia.
- Does the person feel lost?

- Most people function better during a certain time of day; typically mornings are best. Consider the time of day when making appointments or scheduling activities. Choose a time when you know the person is most alert and best able to process new information or surroundings.

Poor communication

- Are your instructions simple and easy to understand?
- Are you asking too many questions or making too many statements at once?
- Is the person picking up on your own stress or irritability?

LEARN MORE:

▪ [UTIs and Behavior Changes](#) ▪ [Communication Tips](#)

How to respond

- **Try to identify the immediate cause.**
Think about what happened right before the reaction that may have triggered the behavior.
- **Rule out pain as a source of stress.**
Pain can cause a person with dementia to act aggressively.
- **Focus on feelings, not the facts.**
Rather than focusing on specific details, consider the person's emotions. Look for the feelings behind the words or actions.

Sign up for a 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.](#)

- **Don't get upset.**
Be positive and reassuring. Speak slowly in a soft tone.
- **Limit distractions.**
Examine the person's surroundings, and adapt them to avoid similar situations.

- **Try a relaxing activity.**
Use music, massage or exercise to help soothe the person.
- **Shift the focus to another activity.**
The immediate situation or activity may have unintentionally caused the aggressive response. Try something different.
- **Decrease level of danger.**
Assess the level of danger - for yourself and the person with Alzheimer's. You can often avoid harm by simply stepping back and standing away from the person. If the person is headed out of the house and onto the street, be more assertive.
- **Avoid using restraint or force.**
Unless the situation is serious, avoid physically holding or restraining the person. He or she may become more frustrated and cause personal harm.
- **Share your experience with others.**
Join [ALZConnected](#), our online support community and message boards, and share what response strategies have worked for you and get more ideas from other caregivers.

Courtesy of alz.org/care

Preferred Assisted Living and Lash Out Loud Team Up to Raise \$\$ For the Alzheimer's Walk

We teamed up with Lash Out Loud for our first annual "Glam It Up" fundraiser!! We had a great time and for a \$10 donation participants got to indulge in wine, cheese, spray tans, eyelash extensions, make-up application, massage, nail art and shopping - not to mention the great company!



LEAD THE WAY.

The Preferred Assisted Living staff is BUSY this month!! Both Albuquerque and Las Cruces locations are organizing teams, raising money, and organizing fundraisers! Please support them at their events!



Enchilada Plates

Red Enchiladas

Beans & Rice

\$6 Delivered

Call to Reserve Yours

527-5535

Monday

September 1st

10a-1p

Organized by Casa Bella Staff

All funds raised will be donated to
the Walk to End Alzheimer's





Location:

Central & Atrisco

At Julian's

Burgers & More

First 25 Cars get a Free
Air Freshener!

Sunday
September 14th
8am to 5pm

Organized by Pearl Martinez, Willow Wood Assisted Living
Residential Services Manager

All funds raised will be donated to the Walk to End Alzheimer's

If you haven't already done so, please click on the links below to join one of our walk teams!!

To visit our fundraising Web page to sign up or to donate today click on the links below:

Las Cruces Walk Team

Albuquerque Walk Team

August Armchair
Travels

S'mores by the
"Campfire"

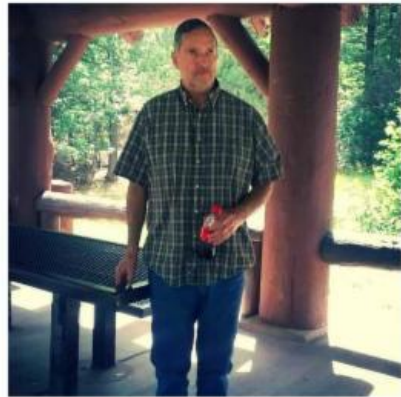
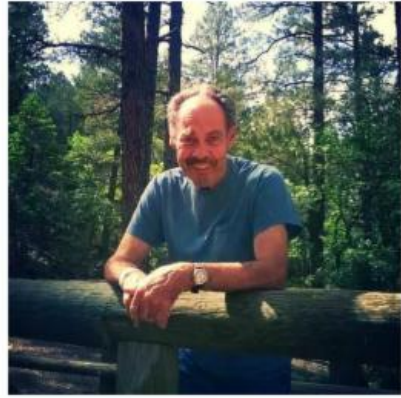


Next Month - Japan!



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

Picnic in the Sandia Mountains





A Visit to Old Town!

Our August Sunny Social

Our fabulous staff never ceases to amaze when they put together their monthly dessert parties! I think some of them must moonlight for the Food Network!





alzheimer's  association™

New Mexico Chapter



Family Caregiver Conference

The Alzheimer's Association is holding its Annual Caregiver Conference in Albuquerque, on Saturday, November 1st at Sandia Resort & Casino!

Details coming soon



September is Apple Appreciation Month!

Sponsored by the U.S. Apple Association,
September is "All Things Apple!"

Apple Dumpling Day, Johnny Appleseed's
Birthday and Eat An Apple Day!

Join Us For Some Delicious Apple Desserts

Friday, September 19th

1:00pm

All Locations



Staff Training

One of the common questions we are asked when admitting someone into one of our homes, is, "what kind of training does your staff receive?" We, of course, must comply with the State of NM Department of Health Regulations pertaining to staff training. However, they have a very general set of mandated staff training.

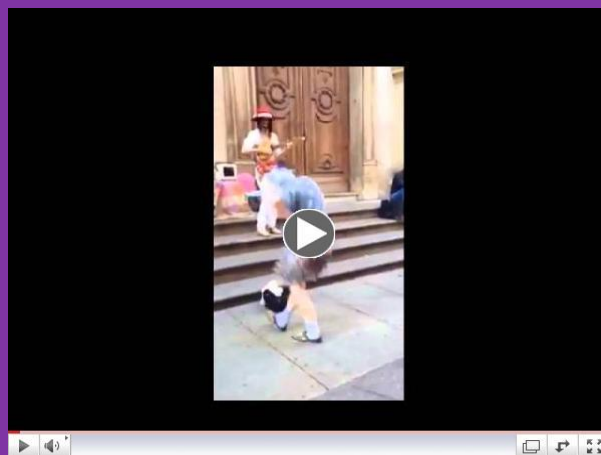
At Preferred Assisted Living, we are very proud of our staff training and feel it sets us apart from many others. One of our owners, Tracy Ayers, has a degree in Education and she works in conjunction with our Clinical Coordinator and Owner, Lynne Blake, along with the team of professionals at Care and Compliance, to determine the needs of our residents and staff and ongoing training.

We only currently hire Certified Nursing Assistants or Medical Assistants, so our staff comes to us with a very specific knowledge base about our residents and what is required to care for them. Additionally, they have a minimum of 16 hours of training where they work one-on-one with the house manager just getting to know each resident and their needs. They have over 24 hours of online training which consists of videos, a question answer section and pre and post-tests that must be passed with a 90% or greater before moving on.

Monthly, they are assigned additional trainings from Care & Compliance. For example, September's training is called "**Person Centered Care in Assisted Living.**" Providing person centered care in assisted living has endless benefits, not just for our residents but for our staff as well. Providing quality care is not enough, our goal should be to provide quality of life for each individual and create a place where our residents can call home. This course addresses several elements necessary to achieve our goals and create a place that is person oriented, rather than focused just on the task at hand.

We also provide routine hands-on in-services on various topics and outside caregiver training opportunities for all our staff.

We will post our monthly trainings and a description of them in our upcoming newsletters. We also 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!



97 Year old Granny dancing in the streets of
Havana

Laughter

is the
BEST
medicine.

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**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



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