

## Changes in Behaviours Late in the day or "Sundowning"

"My father gets very agitated late in the day. Is this normal?"

- Some people with Alzheimer Disease get agitated and restless late in the day. Keeping the person busy during the day and not allowing naps can help. A walk outside if possible may help. Also, following a routine that the person was used to, such as helping to prepare dinner may help.

Source: The Alzheimer Society website [www.alzheimer.ca](http://www.alzheimer.ca)

Possible Causes	Strategies
<p>Due to the dim lighting, the person with A.D. may not be able to see clearly or misinterprets what is seen</p> <p>The person with dementia may be tired at the end of the day and their tolerance has decreased</p> <p>You the caregiver may also be tired and you may be communicating this to the person through your body language or verbal communication</p> <p>More things are going on in the afternoon e.g. T.V. on, more people in the house, busy preparing supper, children coming in</p>	<p>Leave the lights on</p> <p>Plan the day so that fewer things are expected late in the day e.g. you might schedule the bath for the morning or early afternoon.</p> <p>Decrease activity going on around the person. Confine the family activity to an area away from the person</p> <p>Prepare the larger meal for midday. Make quick and easy meals at supper or leftovers from lunch</p> <p>Make sure you are well rested and not on time restraints later in the day</p> <p>Give the person simple chores e.g. folding laundry</p> <p>Get a family member, friend or friendly visitor to spend time with them at the difficult time of day</p> <p>Discuss with the doctor about changing the medication schedule to see if that will help</p>

**REMEMBER** the person is not behaving this way deliberately even though it may seem that the behaviours occur when you are the busiest.

Source: Nancy L. Mace, M.A. and Peter V. Rabins, M.D., M.P.H., The 36-Hour Day. New York: Warner Books Inc. 1992.

