



WHY DOES THIS HAPPEN?

People with Alzheimer's or dementia might:

- be confused... mainly in the afternoon or evening
- feel fearful ... home may not seem the same
- try to go somewhere they used to go often... work, church, etc.
- attempt to get away from noise or too much activity
- be bored – not having anything to do
- have a reaction to a new medicine



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT FOR AGING
AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

Adapted from PLAIN LANGUAGE FACT SHEET, developed by Alzheimer's Greater Los Angeles and Supported by DHHS, ACL (#90AL0002-01-00)

Getting Lost

People with Alzheimer's disease or dementia can get lost outside of their home. Sometimes they wander away in a public place. They may go for a walk or to the store and not be able to find their way home. They may not remember their address or phone number.

Getting lost is scary and can be dangerous.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Be Prepared

- get a MedicAlert® bracelet for your person with dementia
- sew or write his or her name and your phone number onto clothes
- don't leave him or her alone near an unlocked door
- ask your neighbors to keep an eye out and to tell you if they see your person with dementia outside alone or walking away from home
- help him or her exercise during the day... take a walk or dance to music
- put away purses, coats, keys, sunglasses... things that might make your person think about leaving
- close the curtains so he or she doesn't think about going outside

Make Home a Safe Place

- put child-proof locks on doors, gates, and windows
- place locks very high or low so your person with dementia can't see or reach the locks
- place a bell on doors, gates, or windows so you know if they are opened

Be Comforting

- offer food or do something that will take his or her mind off wanting to leave
- ask for help... folding clothes, making dinner, etc.
- sit quietly with him or her... listen to music or watch a TV show