

Alzheimer *Society*

10 COMMUNICATION TIPS

People with dementia may be confused, frustrated, frightened, unable to communicate or understand what is being said.

1. Identify yourself, e.g., "My name is... I'm here to help you get home."
2. Approach the person from the front.
3. Move slowly; maintain eye contact.
4. Address the person by name; speak slowly and clearly.
5. Present one idea at a time.
6. Repeat/rephrase responses to clarify what they are trying to tell you.
7. Ask questions requiring "yes" or "no" and allow time for a response.
8. Back up your words with actions using gestures.
9. Listen actively and acknowledge the person's emotional state.
10. Touching too roughly or quickly could cause increased stress.

Alzheimer Society offices are located in every province across Canada. To find programs and services in your region visit alzheimer.ca or call 1-855-705-4636 (INFO).

- In urban areas, 75% of people with dementia who are lost are found within 3.2 km of the point last seen.
- Searchers – stay quiet and listen for clues, e.g., singing or whimpering.
- It might be helpful for a person with dementia to use a locating device. For more information, visit alzheimer.ca/locatingdevices.

Unique traits of a person who is lost

- Not aware that they are lost
- Walk in a straight line until they become stuck
- End up in a secluded spot hidden by brush or other cover or are caught in briars or bushes
- Found in creeks, drainage areas
- Go straight across fields, creeks, climb over obstructions
- Will not walk out of a wooded area
- Hidden from their searchers
- Do not call out for help
- Do not respond when their name is called
- Found close to roads and railways

When reuniting the person with their family and/or caregivers, ensure that everyone is calm and able to deal with the situation before you leave.

**For more information visit
alzheimer.ca/firstresponders**