

## Quick tips

### Helping a person with dementia during a crisis

When you encounter someone showing signs of Alzheimer's disease, he or she may seem disoriented or confused. Because Alzheimer's disease affects the part of the brain where memory is stored, the person may be unable to answer your questions.

### When you encounter a person with dementia

- Approach from the front.
- Identify yourself and explain why you've approached the person.
- Maintain good eye contact.
- Speak slowly and calmly.
- Loudness can convey anger; do not assume the person is hearing-impaired.
- Use short, simple words.
- Ask "yes" and "no" questions.
- Ask one question at a time, allowing plenty of time for response.
- If necessary, repeat your question using the exact wording. People with dementia may only understand a part of the question at a time.
- Instead of speaking, try non-verbal communication. Prompting with action works well.
- Maintain a calm environment.
- Avoid confrontation.
- Avoid correcting or "reality checks."

**When a person is missing >**

## When a person with dementia is reported missing

- Respond to the incident as an emergency – begin search-and-rescue efforts immediately.
- Search the immediate vicinity – **94 percent are found within 1.5 miles** of where they disappeared.
- Look around landscape trouble spots, like ponds, tree lines or fence lines – **29 percent are found within brush or briar.**
- Use information from previous wandering episodes or other repetitive patterns to point to the most likely destinations; consider areas of the individual's past jobs or homes.
- Use media broadcasts, when family approves.
- Contact MedicAlert® + Alzheimer's Association Safe Return® through the incident line at **1.800.625.3780.**

**MedicAlert + Alzheimer's Association Safe Return is a 24-hour nationwide emergency response service for individuals with Alzheimer's or related dementia who wander or who have a medical emergency.**

**For assistance with a wandering incident, call  
1.800.625.3780**

**For enrollment, call  
1.888.572.8566**

**For more information on Alzheimer's disease  
and wandering, call  
1.800.272.3900  
or visit [alz.org/safereturn](http://alz.org/safereturn)**