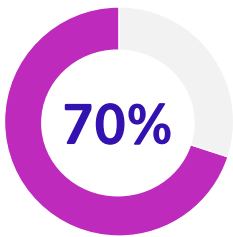




# Recognizing and Managing Emotional Distress and Restlessness in Alzheimer's Disease

## A Guide for Caregivers



In Alzheimer's disease, small proteins called amyloid and tau change, build up and clump together in the brain, affecting how cells function and eventually damaging them. While changes in memory and cognition are the most recognized symptoms of Alzheimer's disease, behavioral changes appear in up to **70% of patients**.

Becoming **easily upset or restless**, known as **agitation**, is a common behavioral symptom and can be distressing for you and your loved one. It is important to remember that this often comes from fear, confusion, pain or a physical need (e.g., hunger)—not from anger toward you.



### What can agitation look like?

- Becoming easily upset, irritable or experiencing outbursts
- Pacing or restlessness
- Refusing meals/care
- Yelling, pushing or hitting

### What may help?

- Speak slowly and calmly
- Offer simple choices (“Tea or water?”)
- Redirect to familiar, comforting activities
- Maintain a predictable routine
- Check for physical needs (hunger, pain, bathroom, temperature)
- Reduce noise and using soft lighting
- Ensure glasses and hearing aids are on



These behaviors or symptoms can become worse late in the day or evening, called **sundowning**.

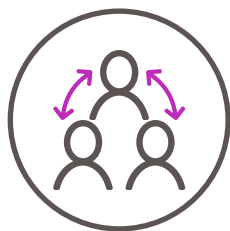
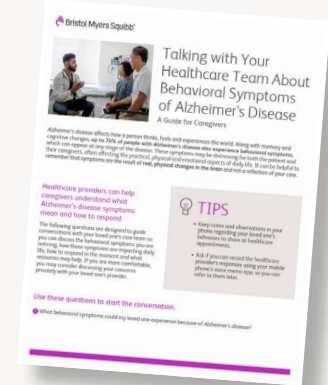


## Understanding the impact and seeking support

Agitation can make caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease feel especially tough. Day-to-day interactions and conversations may become difficult and cause you to feel as though you are doing something wrong. But it's important to remember that these symptoms are the result of real, physical changes in the brain.

Remember, you are not alone in facing these challenges—your healthcare team and your community are important resources that can help you navigate the complexities of caregiving, answer your questions about the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease and provide support for both you and your loved one.

Download this **helpful discussion guide** to bring with you to your loved one's next appointment.



## Creating a circle of support can make care more sustainable and less isolating

**Ask** relatives, neighbors, friends or faith communities to help with small tasks

**Connect** with local or online caregiver support groups

**Explore** respite services to give yourself planned breaks

**Reach** out to local Alzheimer's disease organizations for guidance and community programs

Bristol Myers Squibb is conducting clinical trials in Alzheimer's disease with the goal of improving available care and treatment options. Learn more and see if your loved one is eligible for a trial at [NavigatingALZ.com](https://www.navigatingalz.com).