



## Summer Sun, Getting Too Hot Can Make You Sick

You can become ill from the heat if your body can't compensate for it and properly cool you off. The main things affecting your body's ability to cool itself during extremely hot weather are:

- High humidity. When the humidity is high, sweat won't evaporate as quickly. This keeps your body from releasing heat as fast as it may need to.
- Personal factors. Age, obesity, fever, dehydration, heart disease, mental illness, poor circulation, sunburn, and prescription drugs and alcohol use all can play a role in whether a person can cool off enough in very hot weather.

Those who are at highest risk include people 65 and older, children younger than two, and people with chronic diseases or mental illness. Closely monitor people who depend on you for their care and ask these questions:

- Are they drinking enough water?
- Do they have access to air conditioning?
- Do they need help keeping cool?

People at greatest risk for heat-related illness can take the following protective actions to prevent illness or death:

- Stay in air-conditioned buildings as much as you can. Contact your local health department or locate an air-conditioned shelter in your area. Air-conditioning is the number one way to protect yourself against heat-related illness and death. If your home is not air-conditioned, reduce your risk for heat-related illness by spending time in public facilities that are air-conditioned and using air conditioning in vehicles.
- Do not rely on a fan as your main cooling device during an extreme heat event.
- Drink more water than usual and don't wait until you're thirsty to drink.
- Check on a friend or neighbor and have someone do the same for you.
- Don't use the stove or oven to cook—it will make you and your house hotter.

From the CDC

# Sundown Syndrome

How dementia caregivers can soothe anxiety in the evenings

By Amy Goyer, AARP, Updated October 18, 2022  
To read full article visit [AARP.org](https://www.aarp.org)

If your loved one has Alzheimer's disease or dementia, you may be seeing changes in their behavior in the late afternoon or early evening – a phenomenon known as sundown syndrome, sundowners or sundowning.

## What are the signs of sundown syndrome?

According to the Alzheimer's Association, as many as 20 percent of people with Alzheimer's experience sundown syndrome. When your loved one has dementia (and some other conditions, as well), the approach of sundown can trigger sudden emotional, behavioral or cognitive changes. These might include:

- mood swings
- delusions
- restlessness
- energy surges
- anxiety
- sadness
- hallucinations
- increased confusion

These may lead in turn to challenging behaviors like pacing, rocking, screaming, crying, disorientation, resistance, anger, aggression – or even violence. Many people experiencing sundown syndrome feel the urgent need to go somewhere or do something, but they can't always explain why, or some of the behavior soon abates; for others it continues for hours. Some even flip their sleep schedules so they are wide awake all night and sleepy during the day.

Sundowning can occur at any stage of dementia, although many observe the behaviors primarily in the middle stages of dementia and then subsiding as the disease progresses.

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## 10 Ways to Treat, Manage, and Reduce Sundown Syndrome

- **Observe and minimize triggers.** Watch for fatigue and other things that seem to spur on sundowning behaviors. Afternoon transitions and activities that you consider normal can be anxiety-producing for your loved ones.
- **Maintain routines and structure activity.** Maximize activity earlier in the day and minimize napping (especially if your loved one isn't sleeping well at night). Try to avoid challenging, stressful tasks around dusk and at night. Keep to a regular daily routine – there's security in the familiar.
- **Simplify surroundings and adjust the sleep environment.** Too much sensory stimulation can cause anxiety and confusion, worsened by changing light. Try to minimize physical, visual and auditory clutter in your loved one's bedroom. At night, keep the room calm and comfortable for sleeping (experts often suggest a temperature between 60 and 67 degrees), and dark (try light-blocking curtains or an eye mask, plus dim night-lights for safe navigation). Evaluate your loved one for sleep disturbances such as sleep apnea.
- **Validate and distract.** Simply trying to reason with someone in the midst of sundowning probably won't work. Instead, try to validate your loved one's feelings (even if they don't make sense to you) to let them know you are listening. Try to draw them away from troubling thoughts and anxieties by diverting or redirecting attention to favorite activities, foods, animals and people. For example, maybe they are soothed by watching a favorite TV show, taking a walk, snuggling with a pet or reminiscing.
- **Adjust light exposure.** Some experts theorize that our hormones and body clocks are regulated by exposure to light, and too little exposure throws us off. If adequate exposure to direct sunlight isn't possible, try a light box and use bright lights in the room.
- **Play music and calming sounds.** Try playing instrumental music as they wake up, sing-along favorites or show tunes to activate your loved one, and calming music when sundowning.
- **Use essential oils.** Lavender, rose, ylang-ylang, chamomile, blue tansy, frankincense and other essential oils can be soothing. If you want to encourage waking up and staying active during the day, try bergamot, jasmine, peppermint, rosemary or citruses such as grapefruit, lemon or orange. Test which scents your loved one responds to.
- **Give healing touch.** Never underestimate the value of a hand or foot massage to relax tense muscles and increase feel-good hormones. For example, prepare a warm footbath with herbs and essential oils and soaked and massage feet about an hour before sundowning generally started, which may ease your loved one through the transition incredibly well.
- **Try complementary medicine.** For example, traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) involves acupuncture, Tui na massage, Chinese medicinal herbs and other techniques. Acupuncture has been used to treat anxiety and depression for many generations and is increasingly being accepted by Western medicine. Talk with your loved one's doctor about this option, and find a traditional Chinese medicine doctor who understands dementia.
- **Use herbs, supplements and medications wisely.** Ask the doctor about medications that might help with symptoms, such as anti-anxiety drugs and antidepressants. Be sure to ask about and monitor possible side effects; for some people with dementia, sedating drugs can cause the opposite effect. A geriatric psychiatrist is an excellent resource.

# Help for caregivers is available in many different ways:

## For those caring for a veteran or veteran's spouse:

- Veterans Caregiver Support Line: **855-260-3274**

## For those caring for someone with dementia:

- 24 hour call in line - Alzheimer's Association (always answered by a person) **800-272-3900**
- Alzheimer's Foundation of America Helpline **866-232-8484**
- Dodge County Dementia Care Specialist: **920-386-4308**

## For all caregivers:

- Phone in Caregiver Support Group: last Tuesday of every month - register by calling **715-861-6174**
- Virtual events open to anyone anywhere can be found at: [wisconsin caregivers.org/virtual-events-for-caregivers](http://wisconsin caregivers.org/virtual-events-for-caregivers)
- Caregiver Help Desk (7am-6pm CT): call **855-227-3640** to talk to a caregiving specialist
- Free telephone learning sessions: (register ahead by calling **866-390-6491**), different subjects each time. <http://caregiver teleconnection.org>
- Visit Caregiver Connection on Facebook
- Online help from AARP: <http://www.aarp.org/home-family/caregiving/>
- Online videos from Home Alone Alliance: <https://www.aarp.org/ppi/initiatives/home-alone-alliance.html>
- Online videos from Caregiver Action Network: <https://www.caregiveraction.org/resources/videos>

**Just need to talk: Call Institute on Aging Friendship Line: 1-800-971-0016**

**AARP Friendly Voices Line: 1-888-281-0145**

**We have books, games, and other items to assist you to pass the time in a safe, happy way. Our Dementia Care Specialist and Caregiver Program Coordinator have ideas that can help.**

**Call the ADRC 920-386-3580**

**Help for caregivers is available in many different ways:**

# Powerful Tools FOR Caregivers

**Join us for our upcoming  
workshop**

**Wednesdays,  
September 27 through  
November 1  
1:00 - 2:30 pm**

**Juneau Public Library  
250 North Fairfield Avenue  
Juneau, WI 53039**

**Cost= FREE  
(suggested \$10 donation for  
workbook**

**To register, call  
ADRC of Dodge County  
920-386-3580**

## **Caregiving is rewarding**

**But it can be challenging too.**

Caring for someone with an injury or illness- such as dementia, cancer, heart disease, Parkinson's disease, stroke or other physically, emotionally and financially demanding

## **Taking care of yourself important.**

Powerful tools for Caregivers (PTC) can show you the way!

**What is Powerful Tools for the caregiver?**

**And why should I take it?**

Powerful Tools focuses on **your** well-being. The class meets once a week for six weeks and has been studied and shown to help caregivers:

- Reduce stress, guilt, anger, and depression and improve emotional well-being
- Manage time, set goals, and solve problems
- Master caregiving transitions and be apart of decision-making
- Communicate effectively with the person needing care, family members, doctors, and other helpers
- Find and use community resources



## Card Games

E	P	I	Q	U	E	T	Z	B	R	I	D	G	E
M	R	W	H	I	S	T	I	P	S	F	B	B	L
H	A	H	E	A	R	T	S	G	O	F	I	S	H
R	K	C	C	E	S	K	A	T	S	A	N	A	C
W	P	N	N	U	E	P	O	K	E	R	D	R	O
A	Y	A	F	R	E	E	C	E	L	L	I	S	N
T	R	T	T	A	R	A	C	C	A	B	A	E	I
T	A	N	K	I	J	U	A	Y	B	L	M	D	P
E	M	A	W	P	E	S	M	A	L	I	D	A	K
N	I	F	A	A	I	N	G	M	A	T	L	P	O
L	D	L	B	N	Q	E	C	S	Y	Z	O	S	O
V	S	F	O	S	O	H	H	E	L	L	O	P	R

BACCARAT  
BLITZ  
BRIDGE  
CANASTA  
CASINO  
CRIBBAGE  
EUCHRE  
FAN TAN  
FREE CELL  
GO FISH

HEARTS  
MAO  
NERTZ  
OH HELL  
OLD MAID  
PATIENCE  
PINOCHLE  
PIQUET  
POKER  
PYRAMID

ROOK  
RUMMY  
SKAT  
SLAP JACK  
SNAP  
SPADES  
SPIT  
WAR  
WATTEN  
WHIST

**Want to help?  
We'd love your support!**

**To volunteer, contact:**



199 County Road DF, 3rd Floor  
Juneau, WI 53039

Office Hours: 8:00 am- 4:30 pm  
or by appointment

**920-386-3580 OR 800-924-6407**  
FAX: 920-386-4015  
hsaging@co.dodge.wi.us

**Is This Newsletter for You?**

The things that you do often seem like the regular tasks you do as a spouse, friend, son or daughter, and you don't think of yourself as a caregiver.

If you don't recognize that you are a caregiver, you may fail to recognize the impact on your health and well-being that caregiving demands can have.

Examples of caregivers:

- A wife who has taken over paying the bills because her husband is no longer able to manage the checkbook due to dementia.
- A son who takes time off from work to take his mother to her doctors' appointments.
- A daughter who runs errands and picks up prescriptions for her mother.
- A grandmother in her 70's who is the sole support for her 12-year-old grandson.
- A neighbor who occasionally looks in on a forgetful older gentleman living alone.
- A husband who has stopped participating in his favorite recreational activity because of the time he spends caring for his wife.
- A son and his wife who manage his parents' care while they reside in a skilled nursing facility



**Aging and Disability Resource Center of Dodge County**  
199 County Road DF  
Juneau, Wisconsin  
920-386-3580 or 800-924-6407