



Dementia, Wandering, and Safety



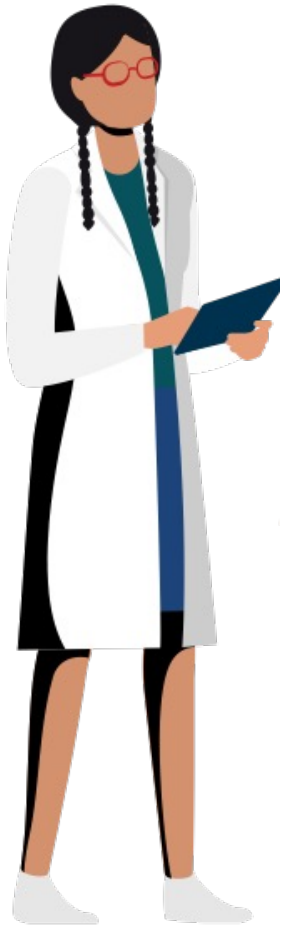
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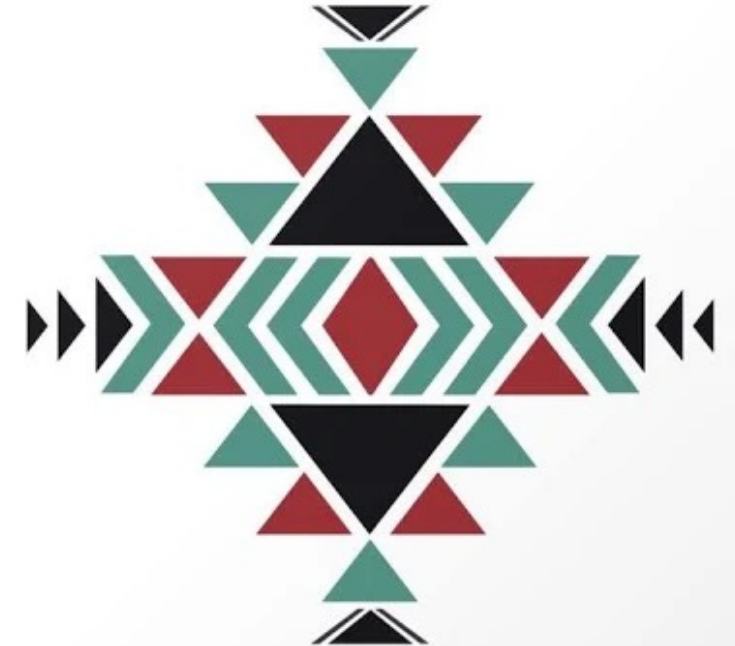
Indian Country ECHO – Dementia Caregiver Support



Dementia can Affect Safety by Changes in the Brain and Body



- **Memory and attention**
- **Judgment**
- **Sense of time and place**
- **Behavior**
- **Physical ability**
- **Senses**

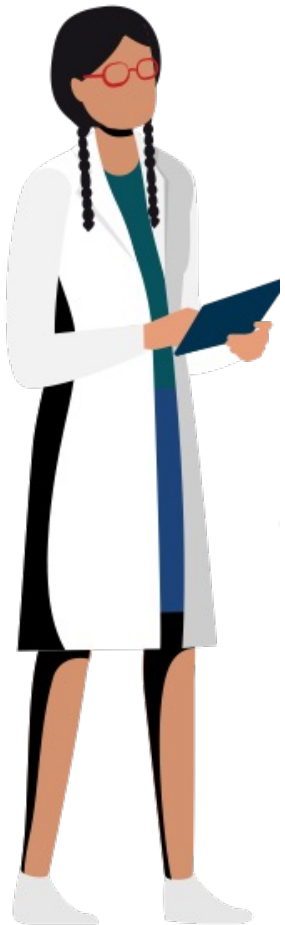


Safety Concerns

- **Wandering**
- **Home Safety**



Wandering – Common Signs a Person Might be at Risk for Wandering



- Returning from a regular walk or drive later than usual
- Forgetting how to get to familiar places
- Talking about fulfilling former obligations, such as going to work
- Trying or wanting to “go home” even when at home
- Becoming restless, pacing or making repetitive movements
- Having difficulty locating familiar places in the home such as the bathroom, bedroom
- Asking the whereabouts of past friends and family
- Appearing lost in a new or changed environment
- Becoming nervous or anxious in crowded areas



Wandering – Reduce the Risk

- Provide opportunities for the person to engage in structured, meaningful activities throughout the day
- Identify the time of day the person is most likely to wander. Plan things to do during this time
- Ensure all basic needs are met
- Reassure the person if they feel lost, abandoned, or disoriented

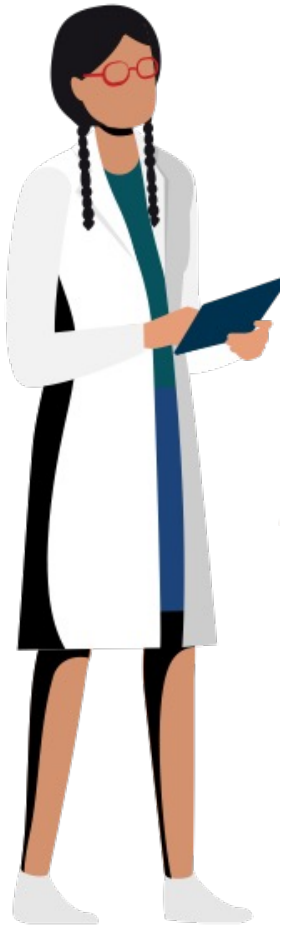


Wandering – Reduce the Risk

- Reduce triggers; keep items that may entice to go outside such as keys, purse, coat, shoes out of sight
- Provide outlets; offer exercise, walks when safe
- Try to have safe areas for the loved one to be able to do as they please, rather than be redirected all the time
- Go for rides
- Give them opportunity to visit other people



Plan for Wandering



- Get alarms for doors
- Contact your local law enforcement to see if they have a registration process or local program
- Get an id bracelet for your loved one; consider one for you as well
- Let trusted neighbors know to call you if they see your loved one out and about by themselves.



General Home Safety Tips

- Evaluate your environment inside/outside
- Look at removing or securing tools, cleaning supplies, other hazardous items, firearms, items that may be used as weapons
- Look at securing medications
- Keep areas well lit – add more lighting if necessary / night lights
- Tripping hazards – throw rugs, cords
- Secure large furniture to keep from tipping
- Make sure your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are working
- www.alz.org/help-support/caregiving/safety/home-safety
- www.nia.nih.gov/health/home-safety-checklist-alzheimer's-disease



Home Safety

- **Kitchen**
- **Appliances**
 - having auto shut offs
 - removing knobs off stove
 - removing knives



Bathroom

- **Grab bars**
- **Watch water temp**
- **Items in drawers and on counter e.g. tooth paste, hemorrhoid cream, tooth brush, razor**



Thank You!



To view today's recording, slides, and other resources:

<https://www.indiancountryecho.org/resources/recognizing-and-responding-to-wandering-behaviors-preparing-for-a-safe-home-november-30-2023/>



INDIAN + COUNTRY
ECHO

Evaluation and Certificate of Completion



To complete the evaluation and claim a Certificate of Completion:
<http://s.alchemer.com/s3/Dementia-ECHO-4th-Thursday-Caregiver>