



Ambulation Escort Needed

The resident may not understand when lengthy verbal invitations are offered for an activity in another room. They may answer however if the instructions are guided using phrases like “let’s go” and “come with me.”¹

What to Look for:

- ✓ This person may need simple direction when being asked to go to and from activities.
- ✓ A resident might grasp tightly to a chair or table when invited to leave the room.
- ✓ They may smile and accept wheelchair assistance to attend an activity but only after a staff member uses a phrase like “let me take you with me.”

What to Do:

When inviting the resident to join you, keep your invitation short, smile often and use welcoming gestures with your hands.

Try using a phrase like “come with me” or “let’s go” to encourage the person to join you.²

Explain to resident in simple terms where you are going and offer your arm or elbow for assistance if needed.³

¹ The Dementia Care Plan Dictionary, M. Nolta and B. Hall, 2005.

^{2, 3} Vasse, E., Vernooij-Dassen, M., Spijker, A., Rikkert, M., & Koopmans, R. (2010). A systematic review of communication strategies for people with dementia in residential and nursing homes. *International Psychogeriatrics*, 22(2), 189-200.





Assistance Needed

Activities of daily living include dressing, eating and personal hygiene. As a person ages, they will need additional assistance with these types of activities each day.¹

What to Look for:

- ✓ This person may need assistance when dressing, grooming and eating.
- ✓ The resident may show signs of being ungroomed or unclean if they are struggling with personal hygiene and they may not be maintaining their weight if they need more assistance with eating.
- ✓ They may not be able to move from one place to another without help and so they may be missing social or recreational activities.

What to Do:

Respect the person's desire to have agency and make their own decisions.² Don't provide more help than is actually needed and celebrate moments of success and accomplishment with that individual.

If the resident becomes visibly frustrated, praise their effort and provide encouragement while re-evaluating if they need additional assistance.³

1 The Dementia Care Plan Dictionary, M. Nolta and B. Hall, 2005.

2 Morley, E. J. (2013). Behavioral management in the person with dementia. *The Journal of Nutrition, Health & Aging*, 17.

3 Cohen-Mansfield, J. (2013). Nonpharmacologic treatment of behavioral disorders in dementia. *Current Treatment Options in Neurology*, 15, 765-785.



Fluctuating Abilities

Depending on the day or the week, this resident may or may not be able to respond to stimuli. Their needs may fluctuate meaning that the types of activities they can participate in will change.¹

What to Look for:

- ✓ This person may express that they are “not feeling up” to a certain activity or event.
- ✓ The resident’s interest or ability to participate in activities may change day-to-day.

What to Do:

Consider providing the person with one-on-one attention to encourage a more positive response to engagement.²

If the resident is having an “off” day, adjust your approach based on their current ability and response level.

Understand that person’s interests and personal history and invite and encourage them to engage in activities that match their individuality.³

¹ The Dementia Care Plan Dictionary, M. Nolta and B. Hall, 2005.

² Kolanowski, A., Fick, D. M., & Buettner, L. (2009). Recreational activities to reduce behavioural symptoms in dementia. *Geriatrics & Aging*, 12(1), 37–42.

³ Cohen-Mansfield, J., Pappura-Gill, A., Golander, H. (2006). Utilization of self-identity roles for designing interventions for persons with dementia. *The Journals of Gerontology: Series B*, 61, 202–212.





Incontinence

This person may have periodic episodes of being unable to control their own bowel and/or bladder movements.¹

What to Look for:

- ✓ The resident may need additional assistance from staff with taking care of their personal hygiene, including their skin health and toileting independence.
- ✓ The person may find that they are only incontinent at night time or it can be a daily occurrence regardless of time of day.
- ✓ Watch carefully. This person may show signs of needing to use the toilet including “wandering,” undressing, rocking back and forth or touching their genitals.
- ✓ A urinary tract infection can lead to unusual behavior such as slurred speech, decreased awareness and changing frequency of urination.

What to Do:

Help the older adult maintain a toileting routine and during that schedule provide as much or as little assistance as is required.²

Determine if the resident is experiencing incontinence because they are not able to locate a toilet in time or they are unable to unfasten their clothing quickly enough.

To avoid incontinence, provide the resident with verbal reminders, prompts or supervision if necessary.³



¹ The Dementia Care Plan Dictionary, M. Nolta and B. Hall, 2005.

^{2, 3} Leung, F. W., & Schnelle, J. F. (2008). Urinary and Fecal Incontinence in Nursing Home Residents. *Gastroenterology Clinics of North America*, 37(3), 697-x



Person-Only Orientation

A resident with this type of orientation may no longer know the time or place in which they are living but they are able to respond to a person who greets them by their name. This person may not remember the name of the person addressing them but will respond kindly with a hand wave, eye contact or a smile.¹

What to Look for:

- ✓ The resident when addressed will recognize a person as familiar but may not know their name.
- ✓ This person will show signs of no longer being oriented to the time and place that they currently reside but do have ability to respond when greeted by name.
- ✓ Person-only orientation includes responses from the resident with eye contact, a smile, turning their head, or waving their hand.

What to Do:

Make a note to address this resident by their name as often as possible to preserve their sense of self and offer compliments about their accomplishments.

Recognize that this person may need more one-on-one interactions that are focused on their interests and current needs.²

The resident may not recognize their surroundings so use gentle and informal orientation to the day's events or objects in their immediate environment.

Ask family members to help create a memory box with items that reflect their loved one's life and interests.³

¹ The Dementia Care Plan Dictionary, M. Nolta and B. Hall, 2005.

² Cohen-Mansfield, J. (2013). Nonpharmacologic treatment of behavioral disorders in dementia. *Current Treatment Options in Neurology*, 15, 765-785.

³ Allen-Burge, R., Stevens, A. B., & Burgio, L. D. (1999). Effective behavioral interventions for decreasing dementia-related challenging behavior in nursing homes. *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*, 14, 213-28.