

Alzheimer's Caregiving Tips

“I Don't Need to See a Doctor”

It can often be difficult to get a loved one to go to the doctor for a diagnosis or even just a routine check-up. The following suggestions may help.



Addressing Reluctance

- Don't Argue, state your position *“I know you are healthy and you feel you don't need to see a doctor, but I would feel so much better knowing that you have a clean bill of health.”*
- Validate their fear and apprehension. *“We need to ask the doctor if your medications, hearing difficulties, blood pressure, etc. could be responsible for your symptoms.”*
- Schedule an appointment for both of you and focus on your health needs. *“I need to see the doctor today, will you go with me?”*
- Add another pleasurable event. *“After we go to the doctor, we will go to lunch at your favorite restaurant”* or *“after the doctor appointment; we will go see our grandchildren.”*
- Ask the doctor's office to call and schedule an appointment with your loved one for a check-up, medication check, flu shot, etc.
- Ask the pharmacist to tell your loved one that a doctors visit is necessary before the prescription can be refilled.
- Give the doctor's office a call before the appointment to let them know you have concerns about your loved ones health and their apprehension about seeing the doctor.

Addressing Later Stage Behavioral Challenges

In the later stages of Alzheimer's, you may experience different obstacles when trying to get your loved one to see his or her physician. Obstinate behavior and acting out may make your trip difficult. Sometimes just getting your loved one out the front door may be a problem. The following suggestions may help your trip to the doctor go smoothly.

- Get them ready to go. If they question where they are being taken, you can tell them to the doctor and then out to lunch or for ice cream, taking the emphasis off of the doctor visit.
- Reassure them, “it’s just a checkup and I’ll be right by your side.”
- If possible, take a third person along to help in the car while you drive as well as to assist you in occupying the person while you wait.
- Know where you are going. You may also call ahead and inform the nurse and/or doctor in advance about the person’s behavior if you will be waiting for a long period. Bring distractions along such as snacks or pictures to look at.
- If the person has any discomforts such as a hip hurting, explain that the doctor will give them something to help their hip.
- Ask the doctor for medication. If the person is extremely anxious and acting out, a prescription to relax your loved one may make the trip easier for both of you.
- Although rare, some doctors make home visits. If not the doctor, a nurse practitioner or visiting nurse service may be able to do an assessment and report to the physician- as long as your loved one’s problems are not emergencies.

We can help?

Alzheimer’s Orange County

**Call 844-HELP-ALZ
(844-435-7259)**

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