

Role of **medicines**

Sometimes medicines may help.

However, they:

- are not always needed
- can help some people, but not everyone
- need to be reviewed regularly
- are often needed for a short time only
- may cause unwanted side effects.

If you think the medicine is not helping or causing an unwanted side effect talk to the doctor.

NEVER stop taking medicine suddenly.

ALWAYS talk to the doctor first.

If you need additional helpful information, we suggest the Alzheimer's Australia website:
<https://fightdementia.org.au/>

Veterans' **MATES**

www.dva.gov.au/health/veteransmates

Provided by:

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Veterans' **MATES**

Managing behaviour change in dementia

A helpful guide for
veterans and their carers

Get the best from
your medicines





triggers



tips

A person living with dementia may experience changes in personality and behaviour that can be very distressing for the person, their family and carers.

Confusion, restlessness, frustration and anger are behaviours that can occur as the person struggles with the day to day changes in memory, understanding and concentration.

Following the 3-steps below may help to ease these symptoms and provide comfort to the person living with dementia, their family and carers.

What can be done?

- **Step 1 - Think**
Try to identify when the symptoms occur and what is the trigger.
- **Step 2 - Try**
Try to change what is causing the problem.
- **Step 3 - Check**
See if there has been an improvement.



Step 1: Think

What is the trigger?

The trigger may be:

A **medical condition** such as pain, a bladder infection, constipation, pneumonia or diabetes

or

An **unwanted effect of a medicine** such as dizziness or drowsiness

or

The **surroundings** such as poor lighting or heating, excessive noise, disruption to normal routines or lack of things to do.



Step 2: Try

What can I change?

Even if you are not sure of the cause, please arrange a visit to the doctor. Identifying and treating a **medical condition or an unwanted side effect of medication** is likely to help.

Making changes to the **surroundings** may also help.

For example:

- Ensure there is good lighting and the surroundings are comfortable and calm.
- Spend time preparing for a change to routine. Avoid last minute rushing.
- Introduce walks, simple exercises or useful things to do during the day.
- Maintain social networks.
- Eat healthy food and drink water regularly.

Step 3: Check

Is there any improvement?

See if the changes have made a difference.

Improvement may take time.

