



McCormick Dementia Services

Advancing community
outreach and support

Home Safety and Wandering

Why the person with dementia wanders

1) Task-oriented

Most of us have something we need to do throughout the day. It may even be something we do to keep our hands and minds busy such as reading or watching TV.

People with dementia also have that feeling of needing to be busy, but they may find it difficult to find things in the home to keep them occupied. They may purposely leave their home believing they are going to a job, doing an errand or going shopping.

Watch out for and remove triggers that may cause the person to feel the need to venture outside of the home.

– For example, remove coats and shoes left by the door.

Why the person with dementia wanders continued

2) Emotions

The person could be in pain or discomfort or feel anxious or agitated. The person may feel that by going elsewhere they can escape those feelings, yet in actuality they are wandering. The caregiver should try to find out why they are trying to leave and give support and validation of their feelings.

3) Loss of Memory

When people become disoriented due to memory loss they may be trying to seek a place that is familiar to them. The person may be searching for an old home, their parents' home or a place that is of security and comfort to them.

Why the person with dementia wanders continued

4) Disorientation

The person with dementia may wake up, see a sunrise and not know if it is day going into night or vice versa. Sometimes they will then get up to seek the answer by leaving their surroundings.

Strategies for Safety

- First and foremost is to ensure your loved one is wearing identification in the form of an ID bracelet. It could be a one-time purchase like the [Road ID Bracelet](#) that has their name, diagnosis and the emergency contact number on it if they are found. The idea is to have a bracelet that cannot be removed and can be worn in the shower.



Strategies for Safety

- [Medic Alert Bracelet](#) identification assists first responders in locating and safely returning people with dementia to their home.
- There is a one-time registration fee and then a monthly fee.



Strategies for Safety

- **Fobs with GPS technology**
 - Watches
 - Necklaces
 - Shoe fobs
 - Phones with a GPS tracker

You will need a smart phone to access this technology. You can check to see where your loved one is at anytime and get alerts to your phone. Your children and/or grandchildren can help you set up the apps. You can purchase these items at any electronic store.

Strategies for Safety

- **Tracking Companies**
 - If you do not have a smart phone you can sign up with a company like [AngelSense](#).

Alarms, Motion Sensors and Locks

- **There are various types of door locks and alarms that will sound or chime when the door is opening.**
- **Bedside alarm mats are also available.**
- **Motion sensors can be placed at the door or bedside that will alert you when the person with dementia has headed toward the door and/or gotten out of bed.**
- **Cameras can also be set up in your home to monitor your loved one.**
- **You can purchase these items at the stores listed on the next slide.**

Home Care Equipment

- **Dura Med 519-686-3888**
- **Shoppers Home Health**
- **[Alzheimer Store](#)**

Calling First Responders

- **If the person with dementia does leave your home please call 911 immediately and have a recent photo on hand to give to the first responders.**
- **The Medic Alert Connect Protect Program** helps ensure people living with dementia or other brain disorders receive immediate and focused attention in an emergency

<https://www.londonpolice.ca/en/services/medicalertconnectprotect.aspx>

Find Us on the Web



For more information, resources and helpful videos visit the McCormick Care Group ["Caregiver's Corner"](#) website

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