

Repetition

I just told you that!



Due to the cellular degeneration in their brains, people with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias frequently ask the same question or perform the same behavior over and over. It can be very frustrating for caregivers.

How should I respond when my loved one keeps asking the same question or repeating the same phrase?

- **STAY CALM**, no matter how frustrated you may feel. Know that the person with Alzheimer's disease truly has no idea that he has already asked that question or told the same story. He will not understand your anger.
 - Focus on the **EMOTION** behind the question rather than the question itself. For example, someone who repeatedly asks about dinner may be worried he is not going to be fed or may be hungry now and unable to express that to you.
 - Use **MEMORY AIDS** during the early stages. Notes, clocks, calendars, apps, and other means may be helpful and allow the person with Alzheimer's disease to self-orient.
- **ALWAYS GIVE AN ANSWER** even if it is the same one over and over. Feeling ignored can make the person with Alzheimer's disease feel angry, frustrated, confused, or depressed.
 - **TRY REDIRECTING HIM TO A NEW ACTIVITY.** Offering an activity can sometimes reset a person's mind and distract him from the question at hand.
 - Take a **BREAK** if you need one. Sometimes a quick trip to another room to complete a task is enough to regain your composure.
 - **LOOK FOR A TRIGGER.** Does this question or behavior happen at a specific time each day? Does it occur only around certain people? Does it happen when you go to a specific place?
 - Is your loved one showing other signs of **ANXIETY?** Crying, wringing hands, showing anger, or agitation can be signs. Talk to your loved one's doctor if you feel he is anxious.