

### Alzheimer's Disease--Communication

*"Some days I can't understand a word he says. When I ask him to repeat things, he gets angry with me."*

- Choose short simple sentences, but speak to the person as an adult. Speak slowly and repeat, if needed, using the same wording.
- Give the person extra time to respond to your statement. It sometimes takes a person with memory impairment a little longer to process information and formulate an answer.
- Carefully monitor your tone of voice. Even when the person has trouble understanding your words, they may be able to read emotional messages like irritation and anger. Try to remain calm and speak in a low tone.
- Give the person one instruction at a time. If necessary, break down instructions into separate tasks.
- Do not bombard him with questions — you could cause a catastrophic reaction. Watch for signs of frustration. Try to use statements rather than questions. Try "It's time to take your bath now," rather than, "Would you like to take your bath now or later?"
- If you cannot understand the verbal content of what the person says, try to respond to the emotional content. This can help the person feel better understood.
- Do not assume he cannot understand what is being said. Do not talk about him as if he is not there. Always treat him with respect since lucid or insightful periods can continue well into the course of the dementia.

### Supporting Arkansas Families Since 1984

Alzheimer's Arkansas Programs and Services is an independent non-profit 501(c)(3) organization governed by a local volunteer Board of Directors.

Our services include:

- 24 hour telephone support
- Family and professional education
- Support groups for patients and caregivers
- Financial assistance
- Community awareness presentations
- Monthly newsletter and Lending Library

**Alzheimer's Arkansas Programs and Services**  
**10411 W. Markham**  
**Suite 130**  
**Little Rock, AR 72205**  
**501-224-0021 or 800-689-6090**  
**[www.alzark.org](http://www.alzark.org)**