

1. Help your loved one to communicate their needs

Often sundowning can be triggered by feeling of discomfort or an unmet need, such as hunger, thirst, or tiredness. Good communication can make it easier to meet your loved ones needs and reduce sundowning symptoms.

Work with your loved one to find a communication style that help you to both understand each other - there are lots of communication resources available online to support you with this.

2. Make sure drinks are easy-to-reach

Dehydration is a common challenge for older people, especially for those with dementia, make sure your loved one stays hydrated and has regular cold drinks within easy reach. For instance, place a jug of fresh, cold water in every room and in their usual places, including next to their favourite chair.

You may find it helpful to place any refreshments in brightly coloured glasses, so it captures their attention when they're moving around their home.

3. Help your loved one to stay cool and well rested

The heat can increase exhaustion and fatigue - make sure your loved one is getting plenty of rest during the summer months.

If you notice your elderly loved one is hot, move them to a cool place and gently spray them with cool water. A fan will also cool them down and ensure they stay well. Make sure you stay with your elderly relative until they're better.

Try to avoid any strenuous activities later in the day and any naps in the evening - this can disrupt your loved ones sleeping pattern making it harder for them to fall asleep at night.

4. Create a clam evening routine

A daily structure can help to decrease any behaviours such as aggression, restlessness or confusion which many people living with dementia experience in unfamiliar situations.

A relaxing evening routine, filled with activities your loved one enjoys, such as watching a favourite programme, listening to music, stroking a pet can help to keep them calm.

5. Ensure safe sunlight time

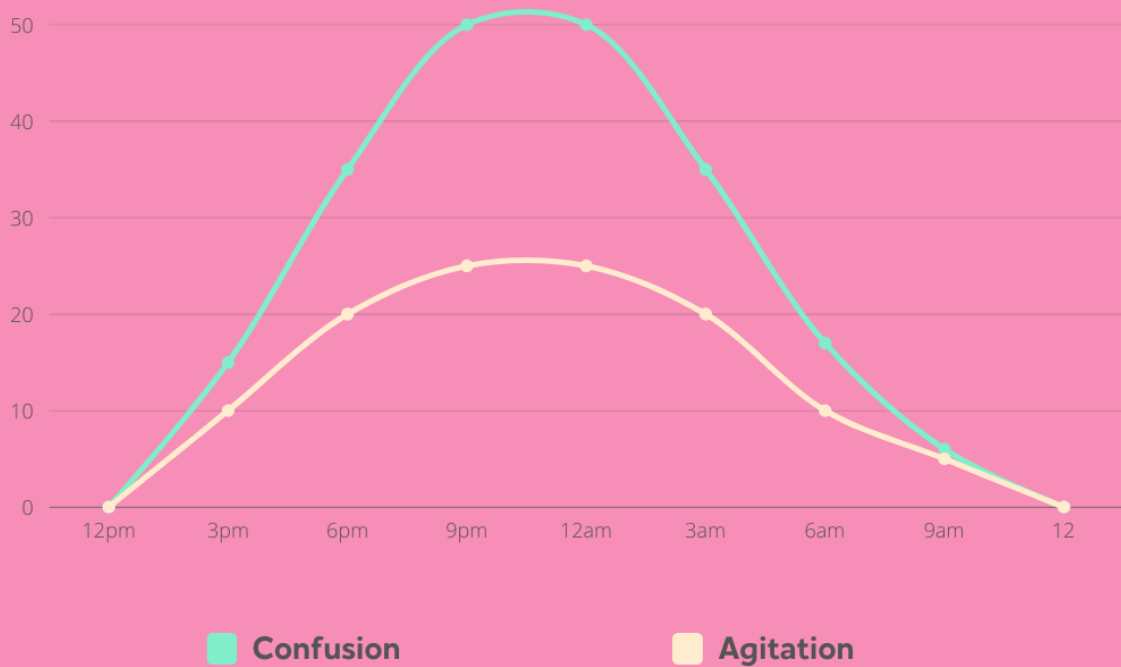
Too much or not enough exposure to sunlight can trigger sundowning symptoms. Help your loved one to enjoy some sunlight during the cooler hours of the day (early morning or evening) and stay out of the sun. You can even enjoy sunlight together by sitting near a window and observing nature outside.

In the evenings, closing curtains as the sun begins to set can also help your loved one to adjust to the evening sunlight and their night-time routine gradually.

[Here is a link to Lottie's dementia care page on their website](#)

What is sundowning?

Sundowning is a term used for changes in behaviour that occur in the evening, around dusk. Some people who have been diagnosed with dementia experience a growing sense of agitation or anxiety at this time.



Tips to support someone through sundowning

Mindful rest

Try to avoid any strenuous activities later in the day and any naps in the evening – this can disrupt your loved ones sleeping pattern making it harder for them to fall asleep at night.

Maintain routine

A relaxing evening routine, filled with activities your loved one enjoys, such as watching a favourite programme, listening to music, stroking a pet can help to keep them calm.



Stay hydrated

Dehydration is a common challenge for older people, especially for those with dementia. They may not recognise the signs they need to drink more or be able to communicate their needs easily.

Make sure your loved one has regular cold drinks within easy reach.

Ensure safe sunlight time

Too much or not enough exposure to sunlight can trigger sundowning symptoms. In the evenings, closing curtains as the sun begins to set can also help your loved one to adjust to the evening sunlight and their night time routine gradually.