



# Repetition

Alzheimer's

Asking repeated questions, re-telling stories and other repetitive behaviors commonly occur for a variety of reasons.

## Why it happens

- Loss of short-term or recent memory is a key factor of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias.
- The person may not remember asking the question or telling the story.
- The person has lost their sense of time.
- It may represent something else important to the person like being ready or not forgetting.
- The person may not be able to ask what they really want to know.

## Tips

### Breathe

- Repetition can drive you crazy. Take a deep breath and realize they are not doing this to upset you.
- Inquire 'why are you asking?'
- Get your detective hat out and ask yourself, 'why?'
  - Is the person worried about something?
  - Is the person hungry? Thirsty? Bored?
  - Not feeling well? Do they have to use the bathroom?
- Once you know why, you can reassure them and address the cause.

### The how-to

- Be brief, clear and gentle, answering the same way every time.
- Write the answer down and post it in a central location. Direct them to read it.
- Try writing the events for the day on a white board.
- Only provide information that is necessary and discuss only as needed.
- Avoid pre-announcing upcoming events or appointments.



**Banner**

Alzheimer's Institute &  
Sun Health Research Institute

---

For more information, visit [www.BannerAlz.org](http://www.BannerAlz.org)  
or tune into our podcast, *Dementia Untangled*