

Wandering 101 and Dementia: Facts, Recommendations, Recovery, and Resources

Adapted from Wandering 101:
Occupational Therapy's Role in
Awareness and Prevention by
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Facts:

- **6 of 10 seniors will wander**
- If not found within 24 hours of wandering incident, serious injury risk increases by 50%
- Complicating factors include cognitive impairments, mental health concerns, other medical conditions
- Most frequently occurs between the hours of 5-7 pm

Recommendations:

- Reduce wandering risks
- Develop occupation-based, therapeutic and reactional activities
 - Maintain physical activities
 - Monitor clients during transitions, shift changes, and evening hours for wandering and pacing
- Use environmental supports, such as barriers (ie door locks, alarm chimes, barriers)
- When a client is identified as missing:
 - Call after 15 minutes of searching
 - Provide Emergency responders with the following information
 - Name
 - Age
 - Possible places to locate the person
 - Allergies/medication

Recovery Process

- Remain calm and matter of fact when interacting with the person
- Technology Supports
 - GPS tracking devices
 - Video monitoring
- **Technology is not a replacement for engagement and communication!**

Resources:

- Alzheimer's Association®
- Project Lifesaver®
- MedicAlert Foundation®

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