SEASONAL CHANGES OR MORE?

As the days become shorter and busy with holiday festivities, you may notice changes in your loved one. You may also question if these changes are an indication of your loved one’s progression in the disease. Read on to learn about the symptoms and behaviors of each stage of the disease. If you have questions about noticeable behavioral changes, please call our 24/7 helpline 800.272.3900 to speak with our clinical experts.

EARLY-STAGE
In this stage people living with the disease retain the ability to participate in daily activities and in a give-and-take dialogue.

Symptoms include
- Short term memory loss
- Resists change
- Withdrawal from activities, apathy
- Loses or misplaces things
- Anger and irritability
- Repetitive actions and statements
- Difficulties with organization, planning
- Disorientation of time, increased confusion

EARLY-STAGE TIP
As the days get shorter and we lose sunlight earlier in the evening, those living with Alzheimer’s may show symptoms of sundowning - generally a middle-stage symptom - even in the early-stages. Consider developing a routine to help your love one ease into the new season.

MIDDLE-STAGE
Typically the longest stage and can last for many years. As the disease progresses, the person with Alzheimer’s will require a greater level of care.

Symptoms include
- Unable to follow directions
- Mixes up identities of close friends/family
- Disrupted sleep cycle and late day restlessness (‘sundowning’)
- Suspiciousness, possible hallucinations
- Inappropriate behaviors, loss of impulse control
- Needs assistance with daily tasks
- Difficulty with reading and writing
- Wandering

MIDDLE-STAGE TIP
Alzheimer’s can cause individuals to see and experience things that may not be real. They may see their reflection in a window as a stranger looking at them. Consider closing the blinds earlier as the evenings get darker sooner.

LATE-STAGE
The final stage of this disease and when individuals lose the ability to respond to their environment, to carry on a conversation and, eventually, to control movement.

Symptoms include
- Total care is required for bathing, dressing, eating, toileting
- Inability to recognize self or family members
- Diminished communication
- Impaired swallowing
- Difficulties with mobility
- Increased infections
- Weight loss

LATE-STAGE TIP
At this point in the disease, the world is primarily experienced through the senses. You can express your caring through touch, sound, sight, taste and smell. Consider baking his/her favorite holiday cookies for a special experience.