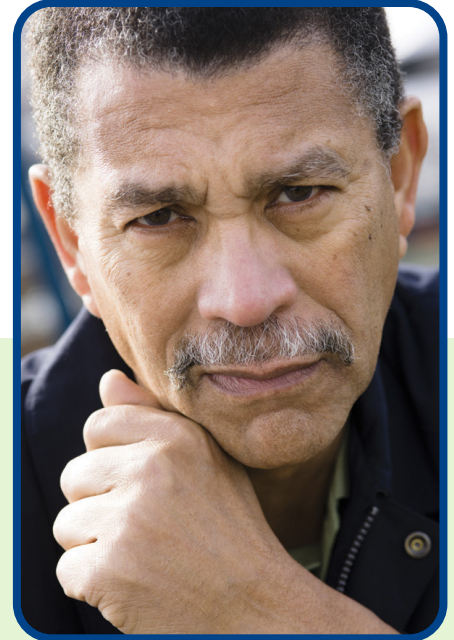


# Tips to Manage Challenging Situations

**When residents are experiencing a high level of fear and anxiety, staff may notice a wide range of emotions and behaviors, such as increased anxiety levels, crying spells, crying out, fear, aggression and agitation. Here are some tips that will help staff provide the best possible care and safety when intervening in these situations:**

1. Ask about and listen to the concern(s).
2. Remain calm and speak in a monotone voice.
3. Answer questions the resident may have about the situation; be concise and honest.
4. Offer reassurance that everything that can be done, is being done.
5. Politely tell the resident what you would like him/her to do.
6. Offer choices. Ask, "What can I do to make you feel better?" Follow through if it is within your control. For requests outside of staff control, share the need with management.
7. Do not become involved in a power struggle or escalate the situation. Know when it is time to step away and allow a colleague to engage.
8. Be mindful of nonverbal body language: facial expressions, hand movement, posture and gestures.
9. Do not take the interaction personally.
10. If you are unfamiliar with the resident, consider involving a staff member who is familiar with the resident.
11. Staff should report any changes in behaviors to the charge nurse.



**The Center of Excellence's [Comfort Menu](#) offers many helpful options to help residents reduce anxiety and discomfort.**

**Obtain a behavioral health consult if symptoms of agitation persist.**