

## *You Solve the Case*

### The Pill

A man with dementia calls his daughter on her cell phone and says, “Do you know if I took my pill yet today?” This is happening more and more frequently. What should she do?

**Who is this person?** Is this a person who normally is anxious? Is he anxious about anything else?

**Making use of abilities that remain.** He has the motor and cognitive skills necessary to make a phone call.

**Gather the evidence.** How often does this happen? When is it most likely to happen?

**Use the formula.** It appears that the problem is a combination of anxiety about not taking the medication and a need to have that information. To be sure, you can ask “What do you think, dad?” to see if he is seeking information or if he is seeking one of “the usual suspects” of reassurance, attention, or social contact.

**Solution.** Create a checklist and have him practice putting a check next to the time that he takes the medication. You can have him sign his name if that helps reassure him that it was done. You can use spaced retrieval to give him practice with this procedure. In addition, you can program a timer or alarms to tell him when to take the medication, and use spaced retrieval to let him learn to associate the sound of the timer or alarms with taking medication.

**CLUE:** If the question is asked frequently, what is the first thing that the daughter should say after the question is asked, and why?