



Factors That Can Impact Sundowning in Dementia Patients



Neurobiological Factors

- Degeneration of the suprachiasmatic nucleus
- Decreased melatonin production
- Disruption of circadian rhythms



Pharmacological Factors

- Antipsychotics
- Anticholinergics
- Antidepressants
- Hypnotics



Physiological Factors

- Fatigue
- Hunger
- Unmet physical or psychological needs
- Temporal changes in body temperature
- Circadian modifications of blood glucose levels
- Circadian changes in blood pressure



Medical Factors

- Sleep disorders
- Sensory deprivation
- Pain
- Mood disorders and fluctuations
- Cognitive deficits



Environmental Factors

- Exposure to inadequate amount of light
- Lower staff-patients ratio in residential facilities
- Lessened availability of home caregivers
- Caregiver fatigue
- Environmental overstimulation (noise and chaos)