



Six Signs It's Time for More Help

One of the most difficult decisions adult children can face is discerning when to step in and support their aging parents with their basic daily living tasks. The decision to help an aging parent is complex, both emotionally and practically. Admitting the need for help and accepting assistance is not easy for older adults. Although every situation is different, here are six signs to consider when discerning if your

aging parents need more assistance to maintain their independence at home.



Changes in Personal Hygiene

The first sign that it might be time for more help is an obvious change in appearance. Take note of unpleasant body odor, strong smells of urine on clothing or in the house, and infrequent bathing. Scan mom or dad looking for disheveled grooming habits, such as unkempt hair, untrimmed nails, unshaven face, or insufficient oral care.

Medication Errors

Next, take a look at mom or dad's medication, both prescription and over the counter. Perhaps they use a pillbox and they have noticeably missed doses. Look for incorrect dosages as well by counting pills or reviewing their pillbox set up. Ask to go with them to their next doctor appointment to review their medication and verify their prescriptions.

Neglecting Household Responsibilities

Another sign that it might be time for more help can be very apparent when you visit mom or dad in their home. Look for dirty laundry piling up, dust buildup, unswept floors, unclean bathroom, extreme clutter, stains on carpet or furniture, and/or stacks of unopened mail. Look around for dirty dishes laying around or placed back in cabinets. Peek in the refrigerator and pantry to check for spoiled or expired food.

Checkbook Activity

A quick glance at your parents' checkbook can be another indicator it might be time for more help. Look for mathematical errors, transposed numbers, checks that were written but not recorded, or checks that were written but never left the checkbook. Also look for unpaid bills or checks placed in envelopes but never sent.

Withdrawal from Social Engagements

Learn your parents' typical weekly social engagements and take note of how often they cancel. Do they get out on a regular basis, or have they been staying home more than usual? Keep in mind that some circumstances are usual for canceling, such as bad weather or feeling ill. However, if mom continues to miss her weekly hair salon appointment, or dad regularly declines meeting up for breakfast with his buddies, these might be signs that it's time for more help.

Decline in Physical Mobility or Mental Faculties

Finally, an apparent sign that it is time for more help is a noticeable change in mom or dad's physical mobility or mental faculty. Watch your parents as they walk—do they shuffle and hold on to furniture as they walk across the room? Have you noticed a change in their hearing or vision? Do they have difficulty standing up? Also look for lapses in memory or judgement. If frequent, it is definitely time to intervene for their safety and well-being.

Fortunately, you do not have to navigate this care journey alone. Visiting Angels understands the challenges that come with age and wants to come alongside to help you discern what services would best benefit your aging parents. Our team works with each of our clients to provide services that are individualized to meet their personal needs. [Give us a call](#) to set up a consultation.

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