

# HomeTimes®

**America's Choice In Home Care**

Your resource for an at home senior lifestyle.



## When to Choose Senior Home Care

Choosing senior home care for your loved one can seem overwhelming as you narrow down the best option. Your decision process entails your loved one's specific needs, family circumstances, aging-related concerns, budget, time, and other factors.

An in-home personal caregiver might be your best choice if you're looking for quality senior care that promotes aging in place and is cost-effective.

Here are common scenarios where it makes sense to consider in-home personal care:

### ***Your loved one wants to stay at home, but needs a helping hand...***

Whether your senior needs help with meal preparation, housekeeping, laundry, or companionship during the day, an in-home personal caregiver can provide the assistance they need. Senior home care promotes independence, allowing your loved one to continue performing the daily tasks he or she can do for as long as possible.

### ***Your loved one is facing health or mobility challenges...***

Some health conditions require 24/7 care in a skilled nursing facility, but many mobility and health concerns can be safely and effectively managed at home — while providing family caregivers with peace of mind. In-home personal caregivers can provide medication reminders, transportation assistance to medical appointments, fall prevention, safety assessments, and other services to help your senior manage his or her medical needs.

Visiting Angels® also offers Constant Companion, which combines voice-activated medical alert technology with Amazon's Echo Dot device to provide 24/7 access to emergency responders. And best of all, Constant Companion works without a wearable device.

### ***Your loved one has dementia and wants to remain in a familiar place...***

If your loved one is living with dementia or Alzheimer's disease, familiar faces and surroundings as well as daily routines may be essential to their well-being. A move to a new facility could upset your senior due to the altered schedules, new caregivers, and change in surroundings. In-home personal care helps your loved one stay safe and receive the customized dementia care he or she needs from a trusted caregiver.

### ***Family caregivers need a break...***

Respite care provides family caregivers with emotional and physical relief they need, so they can practice proper self-care, concentrate on work or family, manage responsibilities, and avoid caregiver burnout. Respite care can be scheduled for a few hours or weeks so a family caregiver can go to an appointment, take a vacation, manage other family needs, or run errands.

### ***Your aging parents need different levels of care, but they don't want to be separated...***

When older spouses have different care needs, a senior care facility could separate the couple. One spouse, for example, may need to move into the assisted living wing of the facility, and the other spouse moves into the memory care section. Separation could cause significant distress to seniors who have spent nearly their entire adult lives together.

In-home care can provide an alternate option that allows spouses with more care needs to receive personalized assistance without having to undergo a stressful move or separation. A personal caregiver can provide an added layer of support for the spouse who requires a lower care level. This enables more quality time spent with his or her loved one.

### ***One of your aging parents can no longer meet the care needs of his or her partner...***

When an older adult has spent a lifetime with his or her spouse, it's only natural to want to care for their ailing partner at home. However, even though one spouse may be healthy, he or she is still aging and may not be able to cope with his or her partner's care needs indefinitely. In severe cases, this can lead to an unsafe environment — for the care recipient as well as the caregiver — and may cause an overall decline in the caregiver spouse's health.

A professional caregiver can keep both older adults in your life safe and healthy in their home. Additionally, your parents can receive customized care for their unique situation.



## 7 Safety Risks Caregivers See in Homes of Seniors

If aging in place is the right choice for your older loved ones, making sure their home is free of common household safety hazards is a critical component for their well-being. Unfortunately, some in-home safety risks can be overlooked by family caregivers and result in senior falls, injuries, and other preventable accidents.

Here are seven safety hazards our experienced Visiting Angels' caregivers commonly encounter in homes of seniors:

### 1. Lack of Slip Guards on Carpets and Rugs

Anti-slip guards can prevent carpets and rugs from flying out from under your senior's feet and causing a serious fall. Additionally, non-slip backing may prevent carpets and rugs from bunching up or becoming loose and causing a tripping hazard, which can be important if your senior uses a mobility aid such as a walker or cane.

### 2. Poor Diet

Adequate nutrition is an integral part of your senior's health and wellness. Eating unhealthy food, not eating enough, and an inability to safely prepare healthy meals are just a few common problems that could prevent your loved one from getting the nutrients he or she needs. An in-home caregiver can help by shopping for and preparing nutritious meals, managing food inventory, and ensuring your senior eats regular meals.

### 3. Outdated Appliances

Outdated appliances — particularly stoves and refrigerators — that aren't in good working order could lead to an overly warm house as well as undercooked or spoiled food. Old appliances could also be a fire hazard. Your loved one's in-home caregiver can make sure appliances are functioning correctly and let you know about any problems.

### 4. Pets

Although cats and dogs can provide love and companionship for older adults, they can be a hazard when underfoot and not cared for properly. All pets should be vaccinated appropriately and should not be permitted to soil the house. An in-home

caregiver can ensure pets do not cause your loved one to trip and can make sure they are fed and cared for as needed.

### 5. Clutter

Clutter — particularly in high-traffic areas of the home — can present a significant fall risk for older adults, so it's essential to clear all walking paths. Kitchen countertops and other surfaces should also be free of clutter. In-home caregivers can keep tabs on clutter and help your loved one avoid a serious household accident.

### 6. Improperly Equipped Bathrooms

A bathroom designed for aging in place is essential for your senior's safety. Lack of grab bars, elevated toilet seats, shower seating, non-slip bath/shower mats, and other accommodations could increase your loved one's risk of a fall. Visiting Angels caregivers are trained to look for household risks and can make recommendations to make the bathroom a safer place for your older loved one.

### 7. Cords

Long cords — and oxygen or IV tubing — can pose a tripping hazard for older adults. Additionally, the use of power strips or extension cords could cause an electrical overload that increases the chances of a power outage or fire. A trained caregiver can observe and address these hazards before they cause serious harm.

Although this list details some of the common household hazards encountered by Visiting Angels caregivers, a lack of help around the home when needed is perhaps the most significant risk to your older loved one.

## Professional Care Assessments

Our highly trained, compassionate caregivers realize family caregivers are often unable to be there for their older loved ones 24/7. Our in-home personal care professionals can step in when you can't and recognize potential household hazards to lower the risk of falls, injuries, and accidents.

Once you've determined your loved one may require home care, you'll want to meet with our professional care providers. We will perform a complete home care assessment before starting care to determine your loved one's needs. This makes it possible to precisely plan the right care according to specific concerns.

During a home care assessment, care specialists will meet with you and your loved one to discuss your loved one's greatest age-related or disability-related challenges, your loved one's lifestyle and daily schedule, and your overall goals for care.

***If you're interested in more information about how in-home care can help your senior loved ones, contact your nearest Visiting Angels® office today or call 800-365-4189.***