

# HomeTimes®

America's Choice In Home Care

Your resource for an at home senior lifestyle.



## Plan for a Smooth Hospital Discharge

Nobody enjoys being a patient in the hospital. As you get older, it's the one place you dread the most. Whether it's an overnight visit or an extended stay at the hospital, the time away from the comforts of home can challenge a senior's physical and mental health.

After coming home, the last thing a senior wants is a return trip to the medical facility.

Unfortunately, this scenario is a sad and common reality for many individuals over the age of 65. Many seniors tend to be readmitted within 30 days of a hospital discharge due to preventable factors such as:

- Medication issues
- Not following diet recommendations
- Falls and accidents
- Missed medical appointments
- Certain diseases such as heart issues, diabetes, stroke

Reduce hospital readmission risks by learning what questions to ask and understanding why professional home care can be vital for seniors after a stint in the hospital.

## Questions to Ask During a Hospital Discharge

The hospital discharge process often feels onerous, and seniors and their family members may leave confused. Here are some questions to ask before your senior loved one leaves the facility:

### ***What do I need to know about before discharge?***

Make sure you get all information about your loved one's condition from the hospital staff. Understand what they have been diagnosed with and what kind of care they received in the facility. Learn which symptoms will require follow-up from a medical professional.

### ***Are there any changes to medication?***

Ask the hospital staff to provide you a list of prescribed medications. Make sure you understand the dosages and recommended times. Also, confirm which medications your loved one should no longer take.

### ***What upcoming appointments are needed?***

Get a list of upcoming medical appointments and mark them on your calendar. Follow-up appointments will help a doctor confirm recovery is on track.

### ***What additional support is recommended?***

Many seniors need non-medical support — such as help with mobility, bathing or dressing, and other household tasks — following a hospital stay. Ask hospital staff what kind of in-home care support your loved one requires.

### ***What are the step-by-step discharge instructions?***

Make sure to get clear, easy-to-understand documented instructions before discharge and review them with the staff. Make copies so both you and your loved one have the same information to follow.

## ***In-Home Program for Seniors Post Hospital***

Many family caregivers underestimate the support needed for seniors to continue on the road to recovery. With proper support and planning, you can reduce the risk of re-hospitalization.

Consider enrolling in the Visiting Angels' Ready, Set, Go Home program, which helps seniors transition from a hospital to a home setting safely and effectively.

***Our Visiting Angels' care coordinators are available to discuss your loved one's needs during and following a hospital stay via a free care consultation.***



## 10 Kitchen Gadgets to Keep Seniors Safe

No matter how much you try to ensure your senior loved ones are safe and secure at home, household accidents can still happen. Many of these mishaps take place in the kitchen. Some of the dangers in the kitchen include:

- Burns by boiling water or liquids
- Slips and falls on floors
- Cuts using knives and sharp objects
- Irritations in the eyes
- Accidental fires caused unattended stoves or ovens

While kitchen accidents can happen to anyone, seniors who live independently may be more vulnerable than most.

### **Cooking and Baking Safety Tools for Seniors**

New high-tech gadgets make it easy for older adults to get all the benefits of aging in place while reducing the risk of dangerous kitchen accidents.

Here are 10 gadgets to make cooking and baking safer for seniors:

#### **1. Cut-resistant gloves and finger protectors**

Cut-resistant gloves or finger protectors can help the elderly handle knives in the kitchen to prevent nicks or cuts.

#### **2. Safety cutting boards**

Safety cutting boards can help seniors avoid cuts in the kitchen. These boards come with a rubber surface to prevent it from sliding and also include rounded guides to keep a knife from straying off track.

#### **3. Vegetable choppers**

Knife-free vegetable choppers are available for people who prefer not to use knives. After peeling vegetables, simply place them inside the chopper and press down on the top to guarantee a perfect cut.

#### **4. Electric can and jar openers**

Electric can and jar openers can help prevent painful gripping and twisting, especially for individuals with osteoporosis. These devices can lower the risk of cuts or other injuries from a sharp can lid or dropped glass jar.

#### **5. Easy-pour electric kettles**

Electric kettles help prevent burns by avoiding hot surfaces to heat water. Easy pour kettles go one step further by using a stand to tip the kettle directly into a mug, without needing to pick it up at all.

#### **6. Clip-on strainers**

Another way to prevent accidental scalding is through clip-on strainers. Clip the strainer onto a pan and pour the water out into the sink – no need to hold the strainer in place with one hand and aim with the other.

#### **7. Kitchen timers**

Kitchen timers are useful for older adults who are prone to memory lapses. These gadgets can alert an inattentive cook to the roast they left in the oven or the pasta that's about to finish boiling.

#### **8. Automatic shutoff stoves and ovens**

Automatic shutoff ovens and stoves can help prevent overcooked food and fires in the kitchen. These are useful for seniors struggling with memory lapses.

#### **9. Oven rack guards**

Oven rack guards, made from heat-resistant material, can be clipped onto the front end of an oven rack to prevent a hand or arm from making contact with a hot surface.

#### **10. Anti-fatigue, nonslip kitchen floor mats**

Anti-fatigue and nonslip kitchen mats reduce pressure and stress on the feet, knees, and lower back by providing a nonslip surface to stand on.

### **In-Home Care Can Provide Household Safety for Seniors**

Your senior loved one may need more than a gadget to keep them safe in the kitchen. Visiting Angels' caregivers can serve as a watchful eye and another set of hands to assist with grocery shopping, cooking, and meal prep.

***The safety and security of seniors are our primary concerns at Visiting Angels. Your local home care agency can keep your loved one safe and provide you with peace of mind. Our care providers will carefully tailor services to any specific safety concerns and challenges. Call 800-365-4189 for more information.***