

HomeTimes®

America's Choice In Home Care

Your resource for an at home senior lifestyle.



Why is an In-Home Care Assessment Needed?

If you're thinking about starting in-home care for an older adult, a home care assessment is an essential first step. At Visiting Angels, a care coordinator will meet with you and your loved one to discuss your care requirements.

You may be overwhelmed by the variety of senior care options available. Anxiety can increase if a loved one has immediate personal care needs. However, an assessment and home care consultation can help ease any trepidations.

A home care assessment is conducted with your loved one's needs, abilities, and safety in mind, and may include the following:

- A walk-through around the home to look for safety hazards and fall risks.
- A discussion about how to optimize the home for maximum safety.
- Creating a care plan that outlines the schedule and services provided.

A detailed care plan provides a "road map" that outlines when and how a caregiver will perform specific tasks for your loved one.

When is a Home Care Assessment Performed?

A Visiting Angels' assessment typically occurs after a no-cost,

no-obligation home care consultation. During the initial consultation, your loved one and family members will meet with a care coordinator at your loved one's home.

The initial consultation details the services Visiting Angels provides. Topics for discussion may include:

- Physical care needs, such as bathing, grooming, dressing, meals, and mobility.
- Emotional care needs, such as social interaction, activities, hobbies, and conversation.
- Schedule, including when your loved one would benefit from having a caregiver in the home.
- Assistance with daily activities, such as light housework, groceries, laundry, and meal preparation.
- Logistics, such as how to access the home, documentation, and other administrative details.
- Preferences, such as favorite music, activities, foods, goals, and expectations.

During the initial consultation, if you want to start in-home services as soon as possible, the coordinator may perform a home care assessment during the same home visit.

However, it is common for families to take some time to decide whether home care is the right choice. You can always reach out to Visiting Angels when you are ready and schedule a home care assessment at a later date.

Preparing for a Home Care Assessment

Be willing to have an honest discussion about your loved one's abilities, safety, home environment, and care expectations. Prepare a list of questions important to you and your loved one, and keep it nearby during the assessment.

Visiting Angels' care coordinators are skilled at discussing delicate personal care concerns in a dignified and respectful way. They can provide a wealth of information and resources to improve your loved one's safety, quality of life, and well-being.

A home care assessment may sound intimidating, but it ensures your loved one's environment is safe and that everyone is on the same page. If you think in-home personal care might be the best choice, contact your nearest Visiting Angels' home care agency at 800-365-4189.



11 Products That Make Life Easier at Home for Seniors

As your senior loved ones continue aging, health and mobility issues may impede their ability to properly shower, dress, bend to tie shoes, reach a kitchen cabinet, and other simple tasks. These limitations can frustrate them and adversely affect their mood and emotional state.

A variety of personal care items are available to help them continue their daily routines, maintain independence, and lift their spirits.

Here are 11 personal care gadgets that can help seniors accomplish simple tasks and make their lives a bit easier in the process:

1. Pill Organizers

Weekly pill organizers can help seniors safely manage multiple prescriptions and supplements. Some pill organizers come with separate compartments for morning, mid-day, and nighttime to alert them to take the correct medication at the appropriate time.

2. Multipurpose Grip Aids for Small Objects

Grip aids help seniors hold onto small things such as nail files, makeup brushes, Q-tips, etc. They are available in different shapes to meet different needs, especially for seniors with arthritis or other conditions that cause weakened grips.

3. Dressing Stick

A dressing stick can serve multiple purposes, from sliding cardigans over shoulders to pulling up or taking off socks.

A home care professional can help seniors maintain their independence by showing them how to use this device.

4. Long Handled Grabbers

Long-handled grabbers — also known as “reachers” — come in different lengths and enable older adults to grasp difficult-to-reach items. Seniors simply squeeze a small button in the handle that controls the grasping mechanism at the end.

5. Long-Handled Brushes or Combs

Long-handled brushes and combs help older adults with limited arm or shoulder mobility to style and brush their hair.

6. Easy Sock/Stocking Slider

Various assistive devices are available for seniors to eliminate the arduous task of bending down to put on socks or stockings. An in-home personal caregiver or occupational therapist may be able to recommend a specific one that works best with socks, nylons, or compression stockings.

7. Toileting Aid with Tissue Grip

Specialized aids – including a toilet tissue grip and long handles – help seniors with limited mobility to safely maintain bathroom privacy and independence.

8. Handles and Standing Aids

Placing handles and standing aids around the home — in the shower, near the toilet, at the bedside, on the stairs, and near a favorite chair — will assist your older loved ones as they go about their daily activities. These devices can improve mobility and reduce fall risk.

9. Long-Handled Sponges

Long-handled sponges are great for scrubbing the back, toes, and other hard-to-reach areas during showers or baths. Sponges come with features such as shower poufs and bendable or extendable handles.

10. Shoehorn

A shoehorn with a long handle can help older adults put on shoes without needing to bend over.

11. Button, Hook, and Zipper Pull

These assistive devices, helpful for seniors with limitations from arthritis, can make buttoning a shirt or zipping up a jacket easier and more comfortable.

In-Home Care Can Address Personal Needs

While these personal care items are handy and can help seniors preserve their independence, a personal home care provider might be the best choice for your family. A trusted, professional caregiver will give your senior the confidence and encouragement they need — and provide access to a helping hand if requested.

Our Visiting Angels' care coordinators are available to discuss your loved one's home care needs via a free care consultation.