

# HomeTimes®

America's Choice In Home Care

Your resource for an at home senior lifestyle.



## Elder Care in a Multigenerational Household

The number of Americans living in multigenerational households has increased in recent years. According to Generations United, a family research nonprofit and advocacy group, about 1 in 4 adults now live with their parents, grandparents, or other family members.

Why is multigenerational living on the rise?

Research has found millennials are leading the movement toward multigenerational households. Some of the reasons include child care, unemployment, finances, and elder care. Despite its benefits, multigenerational dwelling can be stressful for primary caregivers who struggle with managing family and personal responsibilities.

### *The Sandwich Generation: A New Type of Stress and Responsibility*

If you are "sandwiched" between caring for young children and an aging parent, you are not alone. More than 1 in 10 adults with a child under 18 also cares for a senior parent, according to the Pew Research Center.

Families in multigenerational homes are pulled in many directions. The physical and emotional needs of providing for an aging loved one is demanding and overwhelming. It's also difficult keeping up with kids' school work and activities as well as daily chores, including laundry, meals, cleaning, errands, and

more. The physical, emotional, and financial strain can increase over time, causing stress, anxiety, or caregiver burnout.

If this sounds familiar, take a deep breath, take some time for yourself, and don't be afraid to ask for professional assistance.

### *Find a Balance with Home Care*

You may think you can handle everything on your own when it comes to senior care. However, circumstances may lead you to seek professional support from a local home care agency, such as Visiting Angels.

A Visiting Angels in-home caregiver will help you fulfill work and household responsibilities while providing you with peace of mind that your loved one is receiving the best possible care. Even just a few hours a week can make a huge difference.

Home care services provide a combination of household assistance and personal care, such as:

- Companion care
- Help with activities of daily living (ADLs) such as dressing, bathing and eating
- Meal preparation
- Light Housekeeping
- Transportation Assistance for Seniors

### *A Home Care Provider You Can Trust*

Select a reliable home care provider, such as Visiting Angels, that will support your loved one's independence and family relationships. Visiting Angels' professional caregivers will ease your mind and provide you more time to do the things you enjoy, such as:

- Going Out for dinner or to a movie
- Taking an exercise/fitness class
- Reading a book
- Spending time with friends

*A Visiting Angels caregiver will help you find a balance between caring for your own needs as well as your aging loved ones. Our care coordinators are available at 800-365-4189 to discuss your loved one's home care requirements via a free care consultation.*



## 7 Household Hazards that Could Make Seniors Sick

Poor housing conditions can lead to a plethora of health problems—especially for seniors who spend much of their time indoors. Subpar air and water quality inside the home, for example, can pose serious consequences, such as respiratory issues, diseases, and other chronic ailments.

How can you make a senior's home environment a safe haven and free of these hazards?

The key is to identify any potential health risks and learn how to avoid or remove them.

### **Common Health Issues Seniors Face in The Home**

Family caregivers aim to create safe and comfortable living environments for senior loved ones. They remove tripping obstacles, properly label medications, and monitor for visible threats that may jeopardize safety and well-being.

But what about threats in the home that aren't noticeable?

Here are seven household hazards that can cause health complications—and what you can do to protect your loved ones:

#### **1. Radon**

Radon—an invisible, odorless, and tasteless gas—has been found in homes across the United States. Radon exposure is a known risk factor for lung cancer, so make sure to have your loved one's home tested. Home radon tests are available for consumer purchase to monitor and warn about hazardous levels.

#### **2. Carbon Monoxide**

Carbon monoxide poisoning, a condition that requires medical treatment, can cause symptoms, including weakness, headache, blurred vision, and confusion. It can also cause loss of consciousness, brain damage, or death. Make sure the home has proper ventilation to reduce the buildup of indoor toxins. Carbon monoxide detectors can be purchased and easily installed. It's also important to ensure older detectors inside the

home are working properly.

#### **3. Mold**

Mold is a common indoor problem in areas that are humid or experience water leaks. Most kinds of mold do not cause illness, but toxic and harmful varieties exist. The elderly and people with weakened immune systems or allergies may be susceptible. Address any conditions that cause mold in the home as soon as possible. Cleaning out mold infestation can be difficult and may require professional assistance.

#### **4. Pests**

Roaches, rodents, and other pests can bring harmful bacteria and viruses into the home that can make a person sick. Seniors unable to keep their homes clean on their own may be especially vulnerable to pest infestations. Contact a professional exterminator to inspect the area and remove unwanted pests. Occasional pest sightings may be the sign of a much larger problem.

#### **5. Poor Water Quality**

Although most tap water in the United States is safe to drink, occasional problems may impact a person's health. Some older homes built with lead pipes could cause lead poisoning. Houses with wells using dirty filters can cause unwanted chemicals, minerals, and even bacteria to build up in the water supply. Test your loved one's water and install filters to enhance the water quality.

#### **6. Allergens**

Seniors who frequently experience symptoms such as runny nose, watery eyes, and coughing/sneezing at home may be affected by allergens. Identify and remove sources of allergens, whether from certain chemical cleaners or outdoor pollen, to alleviate these symptoms and help your loved one be more comfortable at home.

#### **7. Hazardous Building Materials**

Most modern houses avoid using hazardous building materials. Some older buildings, though, may have been constructed with dangerous materials such as lead or asbestos. Exposure to these materials can lead to serious health consequences for the elderly. Speak to a home inspector if you suspect your senior has dangerous lead or asbestos in their house.

In-Home Caregivers Create Safe Environments for Seniors

If an elderly loved one struggles to clean their home and maintain a healthy indoor environment, home care providers are available. An in-home caregiver will perform light cleaning duties and monitor for health risks.

***If you need home care assistance to keep a loved one safe and secure, contact your nearest Visiting Angels location today. Our coordinators are available to discuss how our compassionate caregivers can make a difference during a free home care consultation.***