

HomeTimes

Your Independent Senior Living Resource for Aging in Place

From America's Choice in Homecare.



How a Home Care Agency Can Help Prevent Falls

Visiting Angels[®] understands how important it is for your senior loved one to live happily – and safely – in their own home. As seniors continue to age, common household items like throw rugs and electrical cords can become safety threats.

Falls are leading causes of injury deaths to individuals aged 65 and older, according to the National Safety Council. The best defense against broken bones and fractured hips is being proactive at preventing falls. Unfortunately, these serious accidents happen far too often.

Visiting Angels provides a complimentary in-home assessment to identify potential vulnerabilities and provide recommendations for resolving them. We also offer a "Safe and Steady" Fall Prevention Program to teach seniors, families, and caregivers how to make the home a safer place and identify risk factors and warning signs before falls happen.

Our focus on safety and well-being leads us to a continued concentration on fall prevention.

Easy Environmental Changes for Fall Prevention

Some very simple changes will help prevent falls and injury:



Lighting. Your loved one may have the same lamps in the same spots for as long as you can remember. Failing eyesight or general instability can make it harder for them to navigate in a dimly lit room. Make sure the maximum wattage bulb is placed in each socket, and add more lamps if needed. Install nightlights with sensors in every possible location. If your loved one is comfortable using a tool like Amazon's Echo, purchase smart plugs so lighting can be controlled by voice command.



Hazards. Almost anything can become an obstacle, including furniture and area rugs. If your loved one uses a cane or walker, be wary as these mobility aids can catch on rugs or furniture corners. Bathrooms can be especially dangerous because of the hard surfaces. Adding grab bars in the shower and near the toilet can help improve bathroom safety for the elderly.



Access. Reaching for a book on a top shelf or crouching to retrieve a sweater from a bottom drawer can make a senior unstable and at risk for injury. Go through the house with them to determine their commonly used household and personal items. Reorganize these items to make them easily accessible at all times.



Physical Changes That Can Lead to Falls. In addition to the environment, the natural aging process can cause a breakdown in balance, eyesight, and other health concerns that are leading contributors to falls. Whether you enlist a home care agency, like Visiting Angels, or you are the family caregiver, there are plenty of things you can do to help ensure your loved one's safety:



Medications. Consult with your loved one's doctors to discuss side effects, especially dizziness. Although a common response to many medications, dizziness may only be a temporary problem as your loved one adjusts to a new prescription. If it persists, a doctor may prescribe transitioning to another drug. Also, make sure doctors are aware of all medications being taken to avoid complications when medications are not compatible.



Vision and Hearing Checkups. Schedule regular vision and hearing tests for your loved one. Blurry vision or an inner ear imbalance can make even the safest homes hazardous. Caregivers from our home care agency are available to take your loved one to the doctor whenever you need an extra pair of hands.



Engage in Activities. Engage your loved one in low-impact exercises that will help strengthen muscles, stimulate blood flow, and even re-build balance. Walking, gardening, and even chair yoga are fun pursuits many seniors enjoy. Many communities have senior centers with a wide range of activities to participate in. If they are not interested in joining a senior center, you can find plenty of videos on YouTube.



Support. Seniors may feel the need for something to stabilize them. Speak with their doctor or physical therapist to determine the best device for their needs. Assistive devices like canes and walkers offer a variety of seat options and storage compartments that can help give them the confidence they need.

10 Strategies and Tips for Long-Distance Caregiving



Long-distance caregiving can be a strenuous and sometimes heart-wrenching situation for family members and their senior loved ones. Adult children who reside in another state—or even a different country—may struggle to provide proper care for an elderly parent while managing travel time and expenses as well as work and family commitments. It can be a draining experience for everyone involved.

In fact, research shows that long-distance caregivers are significantly more likely to report emotional distress than caregivers who live closer to their care recipients.

But long-distance caregiving doesn't have to be so difficult. Essential personal home care services can assist senior loved ones with daily tasks and activities, while also giving long-distance family caregivers the peace of mind that comes with knowing a trusted professional is close at hand to help.

How Can Long-Distance Family Caregivers Be Most Effective?

If you are a long-distance family caregiver, here are 10 tips and strategies to help you effectively partner with relatives—and an in-home caregiver—to provide the help your loved one and family members need:

Discuss caregiving responsibilities. Take time to meet with other family members and in-home caregivers to talk about your loved one's caregiving needs. Recognize and share what you can offer, but don't be afraid to discuss your limitations. Find ways to complement each other's strengths and agree ahead of time who will be responsible for which tasks.

Recognize when in-home care is needed. Long-distance family caregivers can have difficulty recognizing when a parent needs in-home care. Be aware of changes in your parent or loved one's behavior. Tell-tale signs that professional in-home care is needed may include forgetting to take medications, no longer socializing regularly, or not properly caring for themselves.

Ask how you can be most helpful. Speak with your loved one's professional caregiver and ask what you can do to help in the caring process and obligations. A team effort is always a good approach.

Have contacts who can keep you informed. Ask friends and neighbors to check in on your senior loved one regularly to make sure everything is okay.

Know the signs of elder abuse. As a long-distance caregiver, knowing the signs of elder abuse can help you keep your loved one safe. Superior at-home care from a qualified professional, like Visiting Angels, will go a long way toward preventing elder abuse. But you should always watch for signs such as mood changes, different spending or banking habits, increased isolation, unexplained injury, disheveled appearance, bed sores or similar preventable conditions.

Provide respite care for the primary family caregiver. If you live an extremely long distance, you won't be available to help your loved one around the house regularly. However, a few days of respite care when your schedule allows can help you be more aware of your loved one's needs and give you a much-needed break.

Evaluate your loved ones living space. Take time to determine if your parent or loved one's living space is appropriate for their needs and condition. By working closely with a homecare professional and other family caregivers, you can help your loved one stay safe and avoid falls at home. If your loved one's living space is not suitable, work to improve it or find a new housing arrangement that would benefit them. Visiting Angels provides a complete home care assessment at your loved one's residence.

Make the most out of your visits. When you live far away from your senior parent or loved one, visiting them can be time-consuming, expensive, and difficult to plan. However, visits — even if they occur only a few times a year — are an ideal time to check up on your loved one's well-being. In-home caregivers can handle many of your loved one's daily household tasks, so you can make the most of your visit to enjoy each other's company.

Be an information coordinator. While a professional caregiver may be occupied with your loved one's day-to-day needs, you may be better equipped to work on long-term needs, such as legal and financial paperwork, that your loved one can't manage. Creating and sharing a document to keep track of all your loved one's needs can keep everyone in the loop to ensure the right care happens.

Plan ahead for emergencies. In the event of an emergency, being prepared can make all the difference in the world. When you work with family and in-home caregivers to create and share a plan for emergencies that may occur based on your parent's condition, it can be a lifesaver — literally.

Many family caregivers may not be able to provide the “hands-on” help they would like if they live far away. However, it is still possible to form a strong partnership with nearby family members and in-home caregivers to surround an elderly loved one with the compassionate care they need and deserve.

For information on Visiting Angels' long-distance services, and how we can help you find a caregiver who meets your needs, contact your nearest home care office today.





Fish Tacos

1 cup all-purpose flour	1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
2 tablespoons cornstarch	1/2 teaspoon dried dill weed
1 teaspoon baking powder	1 teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
1/2 teaspoon salt	1 quart oil for frying
1 egg	1 pound cod fillets, cut into 2 to 3 ounce portions
1 cup beer	1 (12 ounce) package corn tortillas
1/2 cup plain yogurt	1/2 medium head cabbage, finely shredded
1/2 cup mayonnaise	
1 lime, juiced	
1 jalapeno pepper, minced	
1 teaspoon minced capers	
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano	

Instructions:

To make beer batter: In a large bowl, combine flour, cornstarch, baking powder, and salt. Blend egg and beer, then quickly stir into the flour mixture (don't worry about a few lumps).

To make white sauce: In a medium bowl, mix together yogurt and mayonnaise. Gradually stir in fresh lime juice until consistency is slightly runny. Season with jalapeno, capers, oregano, cumin, dill weed, and cayenne.

Heat oil in deep-fryer to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C).

Dust fish pieces lightly with flour. Dip into beer batter, and fry until crisp and golden brown. Drain on paper towels. Lightly fry tortillas; not too crisp. To serve, place fried fish in a tortilla, and top with shredded cabbage, and white sauce.

Nutritional Information

Serving Size: 8 servings • Calories: 409

www.allrecipes.com/recipe/53729



Rhubarb Strawberry Crunch

1 cup white sugar
3 cups sliced fresh strawberries
3 cups diced rhubarb
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour (additionally)
1 cup packed brown sugar
1 cup butter
1 cup rolled oats

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C).

In a large bowl, mix white sugar, 3 tablespoons flour, strawberries, and rhubarb. Place the mixture in a 9x13 inch baking dish.

Mix 1 1/2 cups flour, brown sugar, butter, and oats until crumbly. You may want to use a pastry blender for this. Crumble on top of the rhubarb and strawberry mixture.

Bake 45 minutes in the preheated oven, or until crisp and lightly browned.

Nutritional Information

Serving Size: 18 servings • Calories: 253

www.allrecipes.com/recipe/12177

Eat More Hole Foods



America's Choice In Homecare®

Since 1998, Visiting Angels has been providing adults and seniors with the needed assistance to continue living at home. At our nationally known, locally owned agency, it is our mission to maintain the independence and familiar surroundings for those in need.

We offer help with personal care, light housekeeping, meal preparation, transportation, shopping, companionship, respite care for families, live-in care and assistance with daily living activities. Call us today for a free, no obligation consultation! We care every day, in every way!

