

HomeTimes

Your Independent Senior Living Resource for Aging in Place

From America's Choice in Homecare.

In-Home Care: When It's Time to Find Help

At some point in life, you may be faced with the challenge of providing care for a parent, spouse, or close friend. The active, self-sufficient person you knew for many years may slowly begin requiring additional help or eventually one-to-one care. Often changes happen gradually making it difficult to discern when and how much help they need.

How do you know when the time is right to engage in-home care?

Signs Your Loved One May Need In-Home Care

The best way to discover if changes are happening is by getting some perspective. It's best to rely on the person closest to them to provide much-needed and personal insight. You'll also want the opinion of someone who has not seen your loved one in a while. Both vantage points will provide valuable assessments. Consider these warning signs in your loved one's physical and mental status:

- Wearing the same soiled clothes on consecutive days
- Decline in personal grooming habits
- Home is no longer as clean and tidy as it once was
- Forgetfulness about medications
- Clutter from newspapers and other items create unsafe obstacles
- An empty refrigerator and inconsistent meals
- A once vivacious person becomes less outgoing
- Bruises from a fall or from bumping into a piece of furniture
- Weight loss

The signs may be subtle at first but can develop into the inability to manage familiar tasks.

Unfortunately, as many seniors begin to realize their newly found limitations, they can become depressed and start to isolate themselves. Living a long life is a blessing, but it can be challenging for some to adjust.

How to Get the In-Home Care Help You Need

For many families, a discussion about getting home care services can be a challenging series of conversations. Your best ally is your tone. Condescending or authoritative attitudes can put a senior on the defense. As adults, this is a problem to solve together.

Start by telling them you want to share things on your mind and then gently phrase your observations. You should also ask them if they see the same things. If they do, then you can ask their opinion about a solution. If they don't see what you're seeing, then you



will have to detail some specific examples.

Proceed cautiously. You can explain that in-home care will offer the best of both worlds. They'll be able to remain happily and safely in their own home with one-to-one care from a trusted resource, like Visiting Angels®.

You can also let them know that having a kind, in-home caregiver to assist with some tasks of daily living will give both of you more time to do other things together. It will, therefore, serve as a mutually beneficial decision.

Ideally, you will come to a conclusion together without having to defer to someone outside the family, like a physician. Emphasize that all you want is for them to be safe and happy and to live their best life.

At Visiting Angels, we offer a complimentary in-home care consultation. During that meeting, we are happy to discuss how we can support your loved one, so they retain their dignity and autonomy.

Some of the questions to consider before the in-home consultation include:

- What type of care is needed?
- Is the need long-term or just help while recovering from an injury or hospital stay?
- Do they need medical care or help with everyday errands, hygiene and home care issues?

You should also be prepared to review medication schedules, interactions, daily routines, and appointments.

Whether this is a decision that must be made urgently or if you are planning ahead, you can rely on Visiting Angels for compassionate, in-home care. Our family is here to help yours. Contact your nearest Visiting Angels® home care office today by calling 800-365-4189.



Helping Your Senior Loved One Manage Aging-Related Loss

What if you woke up tomorrow and couldn't see or hear? What if you couldn't remember who you were? What if you suffered the loss of family and friends close to you? These aren't just plots from tearjerker movies. These events are sometimes real and heartbreaking for the elderly.

Getting older has been referred to as "a succession of losses." Age-related loss can range from deafness to dementia to the death of a good friend. Age-related loss is hard to handle, but you can help a senior loved one avoid harm and find peace by recognizing and managing the process of grief.

The Stages of Grief

The process of coping with a loss is called grief. In psychology, the five stages of grief are:

- Denial and Isolation
- Anger
- Bargaining
- Depression
- Acceptance

These are well-observed patterns of behavior that people move through as they process and accept losing something or someone important. Loss can come in all forms, and the elderly must grieve just like others. Recognizing these stages as they occur may help you relate to a senior loved one.

Losses in Old Age

Seniors face a complex series of losses, unlike those of younger generations. They may lose independence and the ability to determine their own activities to give their everyday lives structure and purpose. They will suffer the loss of friends and family, maybe a husband or wife.

A particularly tough loss is the gradual slipping away of one's own body. Seniors must face losing their sight, hearing, mobility, and even their memory and cognitive functions. These are frightening prospects and difficult events to process. It is easy to feel useless or burdensome.

Working Through Age-Related Loss

Many seniors fall prey to the potential dangers of the grieving process. Symptoms of a malfunctioning attempt to cope and grieve may include substance abuse, depression, self-harm, and anger.

For example, the first stage of grief is to deny that anything is wrong and to isolate oneself to avoid reminders. Such solitude isn't healthy, and it compounds the loneliness and isolation many seniors already face. It can jeopardize effective communication with loved ones, who may not realize anything is wrong until a serious problem develops.

Depression, as well, is a particular problem for the elderly. World Health Organization studies indicate:

- Almost 7% of the world's elderly population suffers from depression
- Nearly 4% of the elderly suffer from anxiety disorders
- Almost 25% of all deaths from self-harm or suicide occur from those aged 60 or above

Clearly, the elderly have as much, if not more, difficulty coping and grieving than the rest of the population. What can be done to assist?

Helping Seniors Cope with Loss

The process for recovery is the same as for anyone experiencing grief:

Maintain their overall Health

Make sure your loved one is eating right, sleeping enough, exercising, and avoiding drugs and alcohol as self-medication. Exercise in particular has a powerful ability to combat depression and lift spirits, as well as empower and focus the mind.

Watch over their emotional health

It's important, when dealing with grief, to speak about it or write it down if necessary. Make sure your loved one is doing something they enjoy once in a while.

Get them to accept care, without being in the way

It is healing to be taken care of, listened to and understood while processing a loss. Sometimes it may be difficult to provide these things, particularly to someone who isn't ready to admit it yet, but the need is still there. Do what you can.

Help them accept the situation and move on

A paper published in the *British Medical Journal* suggests that aging should be understood as a transition: it comes with some losses but also some gains. Help your loved one focus on the good in retirement, hobbies, travel, and other interests. This may mitigate the impact of loss.

If your loved one is struggling and needs additional help, talk to your loved one's family physician. The doctor may be able to treat the depression so your loved one can start to feel better.



Butternut Squash and Turkey Chili

2 tablespoons olive oil	1 (15 ounce) can kidney beans with liquid
1 onion, chopped	1 (15.5 ounce) can white hominy, drained
2 cloves garlic, minced	1 (8 ounce) can tomato sauce
1 pound ground turkey breast	1 tablespoon chili powder
1 pound butternut squash-peeled, seeded and cut into 1-inch dice	1 tablespoon ground cumin
½ cup chicken broth	1 teaspoon garlic salt
1 (4.5 ounce) can chopped green chilies	1 teaspoon sour cream (optional topping)
2 (14.5 ounce) cans petite diced tomatoes	sprinkling of chives (optional topping)

Instructions:

Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Stir in the onion and garlic. Cook and stir for 3 minutes, then add the turkey, and stir until crumbly and no longer pink. Add the butternut squash, chicken broth, green chilies, tomatoes, kidney beans, hominy, and tomato sauce. Season to taste with chili powder, cumin, and garlic salt. Bring to a simmer, then reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer until the squash is tender, about 20 minutes. Add chili to serving bowls and top with sour cream and chives (optional).

Nutritional Information

Serving Size: 12 servings • Calories: 165
www.allrecipes.com/recipe/131107



Apple Cake

5 medium 2 3/4" diameter apples-peeled, cored and sliced	4 teaspoons white sugar
2 cups all-purpose flour	1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
½ teaspoon salt	
4 teaspoons ground cinnamon	
4 teaspoons baking powder	
4 large eggs	
2 cups white sugar	
1 cup vegetable oil	
2 teaspoons vanilla extract	
1 cup chopped walnuts	

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Lightly grease and flour a 9x13 inch pan. Sift together flour, salt, cinnamon and baking powder. Set aside. In a large bowl, beat eggs and sugar for 15 minutes on high speed with an electric mixer. Add oil and blend in. Combine mixtures and mix well. Add vanilla. Fold in apples and nuts. Pour batter into 9x13 inch pan. In a small bowl, mix 4 teaspoons sugar with 1 teaspoon cinnamon. Sprinkle over cake. Bake at 350 degrees F (175 degrees C) for 50 to 60 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into center of cake comes out clean.

Nutritional Information

Serving Size: 24 servings • Calories: 247.5
www.allrecipes.com/recipe/8358

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!

