

5 Signs It's Time for Help at Home

Caring for an aging loved one is full of challenges. And sometimes, just knowing when to ask for help can be difficult. If someone you love is experiencing one or more of the issues below, it is time to seek help from an experienced professional or organization:

Unusual Weight Loss

Losing weight without trying is a sign that something's wrong. It could be a sign of serious illness, dementia, depression or heart disease. Or, it may indicate a lack of energy to cook, difficulty grasping the tools needed for cooking, the inability to get to the market, or trouble reading the labels on products.

Trouble with Personal Care

Are personal hygiene routines falling by the wayside? Are there clean clothes in the house and are they being worn? Not keeping up with daily routines, such as bathing, tooth brushing and other basic grooming, could indicate health problems. Dementia, depression or physical impairments could be to blame.

Difficulty Maintaining a Home

Are the lights on and the heat running? Has a well-maintained yard fallen into disrepair? Are there dirty dishes in the sink and trash piling up? Significant changes in the way a home is kept may indicate subtle health issues. In many cases, some basic in-home services may be the answer. But scorched pots, neglected housework and unmade repairs could mean an increase in forgetfulness, the onset of depression or a physical impairment and may warrant a more detailed assessment by a professional geriatric care manager.

Problems Moving Around the House

Is someone you love having trouble walking, finding it hard to maintain balance or stumbling frequently? Injuries caused by falls are the number one reason for emergency department visits and hospitalizations among seniors and most can be prevented with a few devices, adaptations or by learning some new skills.

Declining Mood and Increasing Isolation

Does your loved one seem happy and actively engaged in activities and interests that he or she finds stimulating and satisfying? Is he or she connecting with enjoyable people? Or, are increasing isolation, loneliness and depression making him or her agitated and unhappy? These feelings are **not** a normal part of the aging process. A professional can help explore the causes of discontentment and work on finding solutions.

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