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## Signs a Senior Needs Help at Home

Sometimes it's easy to know when your older parent needs home care services; after a stroke or surgery, it's pretty obvious that assistance will be needed with daily activities and hygiene. It's more difficult when the need isn't so prominent. People are notorious for being independent and stubborn about asking for help well past the point of their own comfort and safety, so it may be up to their family and friends to bring up the subject.

### Home Care Needs Assessment

Expect some resistance when you tell a loved one there's a need for [senior care](#). It's difficult to go from being the person who took care of everyone in the family to being the one who needs care. Even if you mention things you've noticed, they may brush them off as one-time occurrences, or "just your imagination."

That's why it's important to take note of actions and behaviors over time, so you can build a case. Get support from other people around the person, such as family members, friends, or neighbors. A person won't notice their own decline, but when presented with evidence of actions over time, it won't be seen as a case of "you just want me out of the way." Here are several "red flags" that indicate a need for some type of home health care.



### Changes in Mental Function

- Difficulties keeping track of time;
- Sleeping more than usual;
- Losing interest in hobbies or activities;
- Mood swings;
- Confusion or uncertainty when performing familiar tasks; Forgetfulness, especially missing or taking wrong doses of medications;
- Missing important appointments;
- Consistently using poor judgement, such as falling for email schemes.

### Physical Changes

- Weight loss or poor diet;
- Difficulty getting up from seated positions;
- Problems with balance, mobility, and walking;
- Unexpected bruising or injuries;
- Wear marks on walls and furniture from using them for balance.

## Changes in Personal Hygiene and Home Care

- Unexplained dents and scratches in the car;
- Little or no fresh, healthy food in the refrigerator;
- Unpleasant body odor due to infrequent bathing;
- Strong smell of urine on clothing or in the house;
- Lack of attention to personal appearance (dirty clothes, untrimmed nails, unbrushed hair);
- Unopened mail, late payment notices, and bounced checks;
- Utilities turned off due to missed payments;
- Dirty home and piles of unwashed clothes;
- Spoiled food that isn't thrown away.

## Home Care Services

These signs don't necessarily mean that your loved one needs to be moved into an assisted living facility or nursing home. It just means that regular daily activities may be a little too much for them for whatever reason, and they might need a little bit of help. How much help depends on the individual and their health conditions. Someone who can't bend and reach to scrub anymore but is otherwise fine will do well with weekly cleanings. Someone with vision issues might just need rides to the store and appointments. Someone who can't get into a bathtub without assistance or is unable to comprehend why the electric bill must be paid every month needs [in-home care](#) on a regular basis. There are a wide variety of options for senior caregivers these days, so it pays to do research and find out what's available for your particular situation. A small amount of assistance now for your loved one will prevent a larger issue from developing, such as a broken bone from a fall, that could mean a permanent trip to a nursing facility.



When the time comes to look for caring, compassionate senior caregivers whom you can trust with your loved one, there's only one name you need to remember – [Assisting Hands HomeCare](#). We know this is a challenging time for families, so we do our part by making sure our caregivers are carefully screened and trained to provide sensitive and confidential home care assistance. We work with each family to create a plan just for their loved one that details all types of assistance needed. We can help with meal preparation, light housekeeping, shopping, and companionship. For people with more needs, we offer senior care that includes bathing assistance, restroom use, incontinence care, and personal appearance care. Our skilled caregivers do everything possible to help your loved one age in the comfort and privacy of their own home for as long as possible, and treat them with the dignity and respect they deserve.