



Signs That Tell You It's Time for Assisted Living

No one wants to move from their home into assisted living. However, in some cases, it is the best option to keep elderly or aging parents safe and healthy.

To determine if it's time for assisted living, or if your elderly parent can safely remain at home, take a good look at the present housing situation, health status and medical needs. Ask yourself these questions.

Signs that may indicate it's time for assisted living:

- Is your parent telling you that he is eating, but you're seeing food go bad in the refrigerator?
- Is your parent falling? To determine the answer, is your parent covering up bruises he or she doesn't want you to see?
- Is your parent wearing the same clothes when you go to visit? Can they bathe themselves, groom adequately and launder clothes?
- When you look around the house or yard, is it as neat and clean as it used to be?
- Is your aging parent remembering to take medications correctly, with the right dosages and at the right time? Are medications expired?
- Are they able to operate appliances safely? Do they remember to turn appliances off when they are finished cooking?
- Is the home equipped with safety features such as grab bars and emergency response systems?
- Do they have a plan in place to contact help in case of an emergency?
- Are they driving? Should they be driving? Do they have alternate means of transportation?
- Are there stacks of papers and unpaid bills lying around?
- Do they have friends, or are they isolated from others most of the time?
- When you *really* look at your parent, do you see the bright and vibrant person from years ago, or do you see a more limited person who needs some help one hour a day, or even around the clock?

Making the decision to move a parent into assisted living is one of the hardest and most heart-wrenching decisions of your life. But if it keeps your parent healthy and safe and perhaps even happy, then it is probably for the best for the parent, the caregiver and the family.

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