

When is it Time to Move to Assisted Living?



It can be difficult to make the decision to move to or move a loved one to assisted living. The main concern for aging adults is their health and safety, so it's important to analyze these factors when making a decision. The benefit of assisted living is that individuals can continue to be independent, but also have help with some of the tasks they may have difficulty with.

When and How to Communicate the Idea of Assisted Living

As always, it is best to begin these conversations earlier rather than later. If options are explored before a loved one approaches this obstacle, then each member of the family understands the plan and is able to ensure that their loved one is happy with the decision.

Before approaching the conversation, research what you think might be the best fit for your loved one. This will help you explore options online and get an idea of cost, activities, amenities, and medical assistance. From there, you can start the conversation.

Begin the conversation by stating your worry for your loved one. Highlight the changes you have noticed in their routine, physically, emotionally, and mentally. Show your concern and empathy for your loved one while also being a support through this transition by offering the idea of assisted living.

Acknowledge that the decision to move to assisted living is collaborative. If your loved one is resistant to moving to assisted living, then they may suffer from depression if they are placed somewhere unwillingly. Make sure that they are happy and comfortable with the place that you choose to ensure that it is the best fit for them.

Signs it Might be Time to Move to Assisted Living

1. A change in mobility or function

If a loved one is having difficulty moving around on their own, then it might be time to consider senior living options. Staying idle and isolating oneself can have a negative effect on an individual's health, so it is important that they are in an environment where they have help with their mobility and can be involved in a community.

2. Household changes

If your loved one is having difficulty keeping up with their everyday tasks, then you may want to consider assisted living options. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Food spoiling in the refrigerator or little food in the house
- The house not being as clean as it once was
- Prescription medication is left untouched
- Mail unopened or mailbox full

3. Financial changes

If your loved one is suddenly spending a lot of money or forgetting to pay their bills, consider it time to address their current living situation.

4. Personality changes

As individuals begin to age, they may start having a more negative attitude toward things that used to make them happy. Older adults can also begin isolating themselves, whether intentionally or unintentionally. A change in environment and being in a community can be helpful for those that are facing some of these challenges.

5. *Physical changes*

If a loved one has recently physically declined, then you may want to consider exploring other living options. This can include but is not limited to:

- Having trouble walking
- Extreme weight loss or gain
- Having trouble getting out of a seat or out of bed
- Loss in mobility or increase in falls
- Difficulty grooming or preparing meals
- Loss of interest in hobbies

6. *Mental health changes*

If a loved one is showing signs of memory loss or confusion, then it is time to have them assessed by a doctor to rule out any diseases. Those that struggle with Alzheimer's and dementia can look at memory care facilities for their care.

Checklist for Moving a Loved One into Assisted Living

- Research assisted living facilities
- Determine cost
- Coordinate medical care
- Downsizing and packing
- Notify relevant parties
- Set up new living space
- Support emotional well-being
- Stay in touch

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<https://www.forbes.com/health/senior-living/when-to-move-to-senior-living/>

<https://health.osu.edu/wellness/aging/when-is-it-time-to-consider-long-term-care>