



## Warning Signs that Your Loved One Might Need Extra Help

If your loved one lives at home alone, or with their spouse, you might wonder if they are getting along safely. As your parent ages at home, there are plenty of health and quality of life concerns that increase along with age. Chances are, you can help your loved one stay at home for a longer period of time if you are able to secure caring and experienced help to come in for a few hours, or longer, a week. But, how do you know when it is time to seek home care assistance? Here are a few easy ways to determine if some extra help at home is a wise decision.



### ***Check the fridge***

The next time you visit your loved one, take a moment to check out the fridge. If there are expired items, leftovers well past their prime, or if there are not enough items in there at all, you might want to consider at home help. Seniors who are confused or are too frail to clean out their fridge are at risk of grabbing a drink of expired milk or a leftover that could cause some gastrointestinal distress. The fridge is one of the most telling parts of the home, so be sure to give it a glance every time you visit.

### ***Check out the calendar***

Isolation is a major concern for seniors living alone in the community. Not only do signs of depression and confusion increase with isolation, it's just no fun without a network of social support. Next time you visit your loved one, check the social calendar. Is she getting out to church or her favorite restaurant with friends at least weekly? Does he still get out on his daily walk down the block? If you are noticing that your loved one isn't getting out and socializing the way she used to, consider [pulling in a caregiver](#) to visit and spend some quality time with her.

### ***Check hygiene***

Make sure that hygiene is on point. Is Mom showering at least every few days? Do Dad's clothes

look clean? Is she wearing the same outfit every day? Hygiene issues can point to a need for help either for reminders, physical assistance, or safety. While you are checking, be sure that your loved one is wearing dentures or hearing aids consistently as well (if needed).

### ***Check weight***

You don't have to get Mom on the scale every time you visit, but you should take notice if it looks like she is rapidly gaining, or losing, weight. If you are able to notice the difference in the way that her clothes fit or the way that she looks, you might consider bringing in a caregiver for assistance in nutritional issues such as grocery shopping, meal planning, or cooking.

### ***Check your intuition***

Often times, your intuition will clue you in to anything that might be a little "off" about your loved one. Trust your instincts and have an honest conversation to see how she is feeling or if Dad is concerned about anything. After you talk to your loved one, make an appointment with the geriatrician to discuss your concerns before calling in a caregiver from Visiting Angels. We are able to guide you through this process and look forward to becoming a part of your extended family.

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