

Caring for Your Loved Ones at Home

One of the biggest concerns seniors face is the prospect of leaving a home where they've spent many happy years. But as they grow older, maintaining their normal routine can become a challenge.

If you notice aging family members or friends who are struggling to keep up but aren't ready to leave home, there are two options to ensure they get the support and care they need:

- Provide care yourself
- Hire a home health care provider

Providing Care Yourself

If you are considering this option, ask yourself if you are capable of and feel comfortable with providing all the assistance required.

- What exactly do they need—light household help, assistance keeping track of medications, help recovering from surgery?
- Can you handle the physical demands of various tasks such as lifting heavier items?
- Can your schedule accommodate the time and frequency required?
- Can you manage personal support such as help in the shower or on the toilet if necessary?

Some families choose to split care amongst family members, which can cause stress on individual relationships. To help prevent this, have open discussions with everyone involved to make sure you are all clear about expectations and that everyone has a say in the arrangements.



Take Care of Yourself

Be aware that caregiving is an incredibly taxing job. To properly care for someone else, you must also take care of yourself. Caregivers often experience enormous stress and can burn out from the various physical and emotional demands. Find time to relax and recharge by engaging in your favorite activities.

Seek Support

Know that you don't have to provide all the care yourself. Many communities offer resources and programs to help the seniors. From Meals on Wheels to social workers to Memory and Parkinson's programs, support is available.

Take advantage of respite care. Some senior centers and retirement communities offer adult day programs, which can provide a break for caregivers.

Hire a Home Health Care Provider

Some people find the demands of caretaking or skills required to properly support their loved ones are beyond their capabilities. Home health care providers are trained professionals who offer a variety of services from basic household help to health support to advanced medical care.

Whether you opt to provide care yourself, or look to an outside organization to provide home health care, the most important thing is to ensure the safety of your loved ones. If there comes a point when they no longer feel comfortable or safe at home, it might be time to consider a long-term care option.



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