

When Do Aging Parents Need Help?

When elderly parents begin to show signs of aging, how do you know when to ask for help? When does a “senior moment” of forgetfulness become a symptom of some other problem? When do they need help getting around?

Care.org has published a list of nine signs that your parents may need help (<http://www.care.com/senior-care-9-signs-your-parent-needs-help-p1017-q42231906.html>) right now, along with some advice on where to start. Here are some of them:

Forgetfulness: When your loved one forgets to pay bills, to go to appointment or to take medication, it may be time for an evaluation with the doctor.

Difficulty Moving Around: If your parent has trouble walking or getting out of chairs, it may be time to ask about knee or other joint pain. It may also be time to check the home to make sure there aren't any obstacles to movement or things like slippery tiles. A walker or cane might be in order.

Loss of Appetite: If your parents are losing weight, becoming dehydrated, not eating or not eating healthy foods, they may be having trouble cooking, reading a recipe or holding utensils. Check the refrigerator for expired food. It may be a good idea to hire someone to shop or cook for your loved one.

Lack of Involvement: Are your parents avoiding social activities they used to be involved with? Ask why. Perhaps something as simple as an eye or hearing examination would help solve the issue. Find a source of transportation if that's an issue.

Change in Hygiene: Lack of usual concern about personal appearance could be sign of physical problems, depression or Alzheimer's disease. Talk to your parents about what you've noticed. The conversation may give you some idea of what help is needed.

If you have questions or have decided your elderly loved ones need assistance, please call Visiting Angels of the Tri-Cities at 423-207-0241 or visit our website at www.VisitingAngels.com/TriCitiesTN