

10 *Signs*

It Might be Time to Talk About Assisted Living

And how to get the conversation started.



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10 *Signs*

It Might be Time to Talk About Assisted Living and Memory Care

The decision to help an aging loved one move out of a current home is not an easy one. But, above all, you want to ensure that Mom and Dad are safe and well. How can you feel more confident about whether circumstances suggest that your loved one should no longer be living alone?

DRIVING

Don't ignore near misses, fender benders, new dents or nicks. Request a ride to assess your loved one's current driving skills.

MEDICATIONS

Be on the lookout for empty or expired medicine bottles, unfilled prescriptions or confusion about proper dosage and medication times.

APPEARANCE

Poor grooming or hygiene, like unwashed or uncombed hair and stained clothing, might mean a little assistance is needed.

MAINTENANCE

Sloppy housekeeping or a neglected yard may reveal that your loved one isn't faring as well at home alone anymore.

ACTIVITIES

Watch for loss of interest in favorite pastimes. Giving up things that were once important may be a red flag.

FOOD

Check the fridge and cupboards. Look for food that's old or spoiled—from past-due expiration dates to moldy leftovers and sour milk.

MOODS

Frequent bouts of irritability, moodiness, depression or fatigue are always symptoms worth discussing.

FINANCES

When unopened mail, unpaid bills, and overdue notices stack up, it may raise concerns about how financial matters are being managed.

MOBILITY

To avoid the risk of falls and fractures, watch to see if your loved one is unable to balance, walk up and down stairs, or rise easily from a chair.

FORGETFULNESS

It's not just a natural part of aging when parents forget important appointments, repeat things constantly, or wander away from home.

Conversation Starters *How to begin the talk.*

Mom or Dad may resist discussing senior living because they're afraid of losing their sense of independence. You might also avoid the talk because you're concerned about how they'll react. However, starting the conversation before a crisis arises removes anxiety and uncertainty, making it easier on everyone.

Here are tips to help you get started.

KNOW THEIR OPTIONS

Research assisted living communities in your area—including costs. Find out if your aging parents have long-term care insurance or if a parent was a wartime veteran to explore available funding. You need to know what they can afford to have a productive conversation about their wishes and needs.

START AS SOON AS YOU CAN

Bring up the topic before an emergency arises and you can discuss the future in a non-threatening way. Sitting at the kitchen table chatting, with no need to make a decision that day, makes the talk much more comfortable.

ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR WISHES

If your parents are healthy enough, involve them in community visits. Always present senior housing options with positive language and an upbeat tone, and let them know it's important to you that they make the final decision.

WANT MORE HELP?

You can count on Green Country Village to gently talk with you and your parents about senior living options.

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Call (918) 335-2086 to schedule a visit.