



A Caregiver's Corner Publication... tips for the at-home Caregiver

Courtesy of Doctors Nursing & Rehabilitation Center - Salem, Illinois - (618) 548-4884

How Do I know It's Time?

While many people experience guilt when they think about long-term care for their loved one, it is a normal emotion, and you can work through it. By understanding "the signs" of when it might be appropriate to begin thinking about long-term care, you will be more comfortable in making a decision. Keeping your focus on the best interests of your loved one will help you make the difficult choices.

This checklist is provided to help you determine if the time is right. After completing this checklist, you may wish to share the results with other family members, friends or a physician.

- Is there a decreased activity level or lack of interest in prior activities?
- Is your loved one isolated from socialization with others?
- Has there been a change in sleeping habits, such as staying in bed much of the day, or increased restlessness at night?
- Does your loved one have difficulty making decisions?
- Does your loved one suffer from memory loss?
- Is your loved one's cognitive ability a safety issue?
- Does your loved one take medications correctly? (The right dose of the right medication, at the right time, under the right conditions, for the right reason?)
- Does your loved one need help with medications? (Reminders, set-up, etc.)
- Does your loved one need medical care that cannot be provided at home?
- Does your loved one need help with the activities of daily living (bathing, dressing, grooming, meals?)
- Is your loved one subject to falls?
- Has your loved one been seen in the emergency room more than once in the last six months?
- Does your loved one seem to be losing strength, and need rehabilitative services?
- Are any caregivers suffering from exhaustion or "burn-out"?
- Can your loved one still manage household tasks?
- Is there a dramatic change in how the house is kept?
- Is there an issue with money management? (Is banking accurate, and bills paid on time?)
- Would your loved one act appropriately in the event of an emergency?
- Have others expressed concern? (Neighbors, friends, physician, minister, etc.)