



STEP-BY-STEP  
GUIDE



Comfort  
Keepers®

a *sodexo* brand



# Is It Time for In-Home Care?

Helping Your Loved Ones Maintain Their  
Independence and Quality of Life



# Welcome to the Comfort Keepers® Guide to In-Home Care

Introduction



Determining if It's Time for Help



Staying Safe, Happy, and Healthy at Home



Evaluating In-Home Care Options



The Comfort Keepers® Difference



Financial Considerations



Consult with a Care Coordinator



BACK



NEXT



DOWNLOAD



LINK

Look for these icons throughout the guide. Use the forward and back arrows to move through the pages or download or link to the guide for later viewing.





## Caring for the Ones Who Cared for You

Maybe you've already gotten the phone call, or you're worried it's coming any day now—the one that explains how your mother tripped and fell, or your father became ill because he wasn't taking the correct dosages of his medications.

Knowing when to step in for parents and get them extra help can be difficult, especially if you're not living in the same town or city and aren't in a position to help them yourself. That's when you need to find someone you can trust. This brochure is a way to help you do that.

Inside, you'll find steps to help you determine if it's time for in-home care and tips for evaluating potential care providers. We'll also introduce you to the range of services available from Comfort Keepers® to assist with your evaluation.

OVER  
**70%**

of seniors 75 and older  
are impacted by physical  
functioning limitation.

Source: CDC/NHIS Survey Data, 2012

# Determining if Your Loved One Needs Assistance

Figuring out if your parent or loved one needs extra help isn't always easy, but there are signs that can help you determine if it's time to introduce care. Consider the following scenarios:



Has there been a recent crisis?



Is he/she becoming more forgetful?



Is he/she able to run errands alone?



Does the individual bathe less often?



Have there been recent falls?



Are there scorch marks on dish towels?



Are pills left over or running out too soon?



Has there been any recent weight loss or gain?



Is routine house cleaning not being done?



Does the individual need help walking?



Is his/her hearing affecting daily function?



Is his/her clothing changed daily?



Is he/she verbally or physically abusive?



Is his/her vision affecting daily function?



Have social activities diminished?

If only ONE of the scenarios here applies to your situation, it may be time to consider in-home care.

It will help to have this information available when calling to discuss your loved one.

[Download Printable Worksheet](#)







## Initiating a Conversation

Discussing a senior's need for care can be uncomfortable, which is why these discussions often don't happen. The best advice is to plan carefully and keep talks positive and productive. Don't approach this as "The Conversation," but as an ongoing series of chats. Address one issue at a time rather than trying to resolve everything at once.

**Below are additional tips for starting discussions:**

- Begin early when your parents' health allows them to fully share their wants, needs, and preferences.
- Choose a time and place that makes everyone comfortable. Avoid special family occasions or events with time constraints so that you can have a relaxed, unhurried conversation.
- Make the experience non-threatening by letting your parents know you're concerned for their wellbeing and want to help.
- Offer options, not advice. Pose questions, listen, and offer more than one acceptable solution.

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“ We were at the end of our rope and didn't know who to turn to. I was going to quit my job so I could stay with him when Comfort Keepers came into our lives. **Paul H.** ”

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[More Advice and Strategies](#)







## Staying Safe, Happy, and Healthy at Home

Sometimes the first thought is to move loved ones to a facility, but moving parents against their wishes can lead to frustration and depression. Formerly independent adults suddenly find themselves in unfamiliar and stressful environments, forced to comply with pre-set schedules. By contrast, helping parents remain in their homes where they are comfortable and happy allows them to maintain their lifestyles, independence, and community relationships.

Aging in place has other benefits, not the least of which is cost savings. For those who already own their homes, old age is often much less of a financial burden. Residence in an assisted living facility can cost hundreds of dollars per day. On the other hand, with the help of a caregiver, care dollars stretch much further.

DID YOU KNOW

89%

of seniors say they would prefer to remain in their homes indefinitely as they age?

Source: AARP

# What to Look for in a Care Provider

Finding organizations you can trust to take care of those you love most is not easy. They must be professional, trustworthy, and have the ability to meet your loved one's needs. When you are evaluating care providers, make sure to ask the following questions:

	YES	NO
1. Does the agency carry liability coverage?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Does the agency conduct criminal background checks and check driving records?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Does the agency provide 24/7 telephone service?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Does the agency provide backup coverage?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Do agency services include personal care, such as bathing, incontinence care, and mobility assistance?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Does the agency provide transportation services?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Does the agency make periodic supervisory visits to clients' homes?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Can the agency provide documentation explaining the client's rights, code of ethics, workers' compensation, and HIPAA compliance?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Will the agency provide an in-home assessment?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Does the agency provide ongoing training to caregivers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



For access to the full set of questions, download our 20 Questions Worksheet.

Download Worksheet







## The Comfort Keepers' Difference

Comfort Keepers offers quality, loving, in-home care services for families just like yours.

Our custom care plans provide just the right mix of services that preserve your loved ones' independence, maintain their in-home safety, and enhance the quality of their lives.

### We Are as Strong as the Company We Keep

Interactive Caregiving™, our distinctive approach to in-home care, is at the very heart of Comfort Keepers. Our dedicated caregivers, the people we refer to as *Comfort Keepers*®, transform day-to-day caregiving into opportunities for meaningful conversation and activities that engage and enrich the lives of seniors physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally.

Our *Comfort Keepers* are our employees, not contractors, whom we select after a rigorous interview process, and who go through continuing education classes to provide the best care. They are also bonded, insured, and covered by workers' compensation to protect our clients and their families.



More on the Comfort Keepers' Difference 





## Personal Care

Sometimes even the most basic tasks can become the most difficult. Our trained professionals make daily life easier by offering a variety of customized, personal care services to meet the unique needs of each senior. These services help seniors stay safe in their own homes longer. Our personal care services include the following:

- Bathing, grooming, and hygiene
- Mobility assistance
- Transferring and positioning
- Toileting and incontinence care
- Feeding and special diet
- Dementia care
- Medication reminders

In addition, our *Comfort Keepers* help make certain that seniors and other clients stay on prescribed diets that prevent or control a wide variety of medical conditions, such as heart disease and diabetes. In general, our *Comfort Keepers* enable clients to eat well-balanced diets that provide the energy and nutrients needed for active, healthful living.

[More on Personal Care](#)



## Care Services

Staying social and engaged increases seniors' quality of life and prevents depression and cognitive decline. In addition to personal care services, our *Comfort Keepers* can provide:

- Companionship
- Meal preparation
- Laundry
- Light housekeeping
- Incidental transportation
- Grocery shopping
- Errand services
- Live-in services (where available)
- 24-hour care
- Respite care or relief for family

More on Care Services





# Home Safety

Seniors living alone face many risks, from falls and missed medications to accidents. For those with dementia, simply engaging in the wrong activity can put them in harm's way. It's a dilemma faced by many families: balancing respect for your loved one's independence with the fear that the worst could happen.

Comfort Keepers offers a full line of in-home safety technology called *SafetyChoice*® that can help provide safety solutions that put minds at ease. The *SafetyChoice* Centralized Monitoring station is staffed 24/7 with caring, knowledgeable associates who answer promptly and stay on the phone until help arrives. Solutions include the following:

- **Personal Emergency Response Systems:** Two-way devices that provide real-time voice interaction in the event of a fall, illness, or emergency
- **Medication Safety and Management:** Medication control devices that help loved ones stay on track with their medications every day
- **Home Monitoring Systems:** Bedside pressure mats and motion detectors that enhance home security and provide peace of mind\*

\*Not available in all states

“ From the initial phone contact...through to the care providers, I found Comfort Keepers to be a caring and professional service. You demonstrated your patience and concern for my mother's situation, and you were open to feedback. **Josi P.** ”

More on Home Safety





## FACTS AND FIGURES

**5**  
MILLION

More than **5 million** Americans are living with Alzheimer's.

**70**  
SECONDS

**Every 70 seconds** someone in America develops Alzheimer's disease.

**\$220**  
BILLION

In 2013, 15.5 million family and friends provided an estimated 17.7 billion hours of unpaid care valued at more than **\$220 billion**.

*Source: Alzheimer's Association*

## Dementia Care

For seniors with Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia, living at home in a familiar environment can be helpful because it surrounds them with memory cues that can reduce confusion and enhance mental engagement. In-home care from our specially trained caregivers give your family the care and support you need:

- Education for your family to help you better understand dementia and what you can do for your loved one
- Structured activities geared to your loved one's interests and capabilities that minimize dementia symptoms
- Home modification guidance
- Connection to medical professionals, support groups, and other resources
- In-home medical alert systems and motion detectors

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“ I want to personally thank you for taking care of my mom during her last days. Your time with her was special and helped make her comfortable. **Kim** ”

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More on Dementia Care







## Financial Considerations and Resources

There are many funding options available for in-home care. Researching options based on you or your loved one's financial situation is critical to finding the most advantageous way to pay for care. Below are some of the most common options, with brief explanations on how the programs work. Be sure to research all your options thoroughly as options vary by individual.

- **Medicare.** Medicare applies to long-term care in limited circumstances, such as immediately following a hospital stay. It also covers short-term, physician-prescribed home health care for skilled nursing; physical, occupational, and speech therapy; medical social services; and assistance with bathing, feeding, and other personal care.
- **Medicaid and State Programs.** Medicaid, the largest public payor for long-term care, may cover some in-home care services.
- **Long-Term Care Insurance.** Long-term care insurance helps pay the costs of long-term care, preventing the depletion of life savings. However, coverage is expensive, as premiums increase with the age of the purchaser.
- **Veterans Administration (VA) Aid and Attendance Pension Benefit.** Veterans and their surviving spouses may qualify for VA benefits to cover some of the cost of in-home care.
- **Out of Pocket.** Determining out-of-pocket costs and how to minimize them is best done after considering all your options.

[More on Financial Considerations](#)



## We Are There When You Need Us

Let's work together to find a solution for your loved one.  
To learn more about providing in-home care for your loved one, contact us today.

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