



Comfort
Keepers.

Elevating the
Human SpiritSM



| IN-HOME CARE |

Moment by moment

A practical guide to helping seniors enjoy the best quality of life at home

What you'll find in this guide

Useful information and insights to help you through moments that can impact quality of life for you and your family—especially your senior loved ones.

Jump to a Moment

Click on a category to the right to go directly to that section. Or, click on the arrows to move forward and backward.



Meaningful Moments



Activities of Daily Living



Physician Visit



Driving & Independence



Mental & Emotional Health



Housing Care Options

75%

of seniors intend to stay in their homes until the end of their lives.

Source: National Council On Aging

Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory.

– Dr Seuss



What is quality of life?

Evolving

At a basic level, quality of life is a combination of health, comfort, and happiness. It's a simple formula that is always evolving. Think about what it took for you to be healthy, comfortable, and happy as a kid compared to what it takes for you to feel this way about your quality of life today. Everyone's quality of life equation changes with age, and each variation has a profound impact on their well-being.

Personal

Life is made up of moments that we share with other people or experience by ourselves. All of these moments factor into our quality of life formula. For many seniors, most of these moments happen at home. To help your parent enjoy the quality of life they deserve, you should find ways to create moments that enable them to preserve their dignity and bring them joy and purpose in the comfort of their own home.

A Family affair

A healthy family dynamic means having the ability to meet each family member's needs on an individual basis. While it can be easy to get carried away with the worry and responsibility of caring for your family members, if you're not at your best, it's difficult to give your best. So, be on the lookout for moments that signal you could use some help. Knowing when to reach out can make a big difference in your family's quality of life.



TAKEAWAY

Learn how to ask for help.
Read *Making Tough Choices*



What you need to know

Resources to help you prepare and plan



Activities of
Daily Living

Tasks essential for day-to-day functioning

Activities of Daily Living, sometimes referred to as ADLs, include the routine tasks of everyday life. Bathing, dressing, eating, using the restroom, moving around the house, and getting in and out of chairs are activities that most of us take for granted, but can become challenging for seniors. If a senior is unable to safely and effectively manage these activities on their own, they need help.

If you think your loved one needs help to be safe, healthy, and happy at home, talk to them and find out what's going on. Let them know you care and worry about them. Then, discuss the situation with your family and your parent's doctor. You can also reach out to a reputable in-home care provider, like Comfort Keepers®, in your area for a consultation.

DID YOU KNOW

58%

of older adults have lived
in the same residence for
20 years or more.

Source: National Council On Aging





What to look for and when to seek help

While activities of daily living typically include basic hygiene routines and mobility, challenges with Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL) commonly present themselves first. IADLs are considered activities less basic than traditional ADLs, however they are essential to enhancing your loved one's quality of life.

Seniors often need help with:

- Transportation
- Grocery shopping
- Housework
- Meal preparation



INSTRUMENTAL ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING (IADL)

- Cooking
- Shopping
- Driving
- Paying Bills
- Taking Medication
- Cleaning the House
- Using the Telephone
- Caring for a Pet
- Laundry

ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING (ADL)

- Dressing
- Washing / Grooming
- Eating / Drinking
- Toileting
- Oral Hygiene
- Standing from a Sitting Position
- Moving from Bed to Chair
- Walking
- Climbing Stairs



Activities of Daily Living

Signs your loved one may need assistance with ADLs



Skipping meals



Weight loss



Confusing the date/year



Expired food in the refrigerator



Self-isolation



Bruises/ scrapes from falling or loss of balance



Lapses in personal hygiene



Wearing the same clothing several days at a time



Forgetting appointments



Forgetting medicine



Reluctance to go upstairs



Furniture moved around





92%

of older adults have at least one chronic disease, and 77% have at least two.

Source: National Council On Aging



Physician
Visit

Knowing what to ask so you know how to help

When it comes to the health and well-being of your loved one, their doctor is an indispensable resource.

So, if you have concerns about whether you are meeting your loved one's quality of life needs, a visit to the doctor's office is a great way to get more guidance on how you can help.

Plus, being there to hear what the doctor says firsthand can minimize misunderstandings and allows you to show support for your parent and make them feel more comfortable during their visit.



Physician
Visit

Questions to ask

Download the full list of questions and take to the appointment with you.

Diagnosis

- What is the name of the condition?
- What causes this problem?
- How will it be treated/managed?

Medications

- What is the name of the medication?
- What will it treat?
- What are the common side effects?

Medical Tests

- Why is this test being done?
- What are the possible side effects?
- How will we find out the test results?



TAKEAWAY
Download questions
to ask the doctor



When and how to ask for the keys

Driving is empowering. Behind the wheel, we have the freedom to go where we want, when we want. And for the generations that grew up during the glory days of American car culture, the connection between driving and independence is deeply rooted. It's part of who they are.

So, when you notice that your loved one is losing their ability to drive safely, it's important to talk to them about it in a non-confrontational way that shows your concern, without being damaging their pride. Remember, you are not just asking them for their keys, you're asking them to give up a part of their independence.

Warning signs

- Damage or unusual wear on vehicle
- Tickets or fines
- Improper car maintenance
- Fearful or skittish about driving



TAKEAWAY
For more information, read
Aging and Driving



Starting the conversation

“I’m worried about you, and I want us to be on the same page. Can we talk about your driving?”

“Dad, how’s driving been? Is it hard to see the lines on the road, see the traffic light colours and/or drive at night?”

“I noticed you’ve been catching rides with Clyde lately. Is everything okay with your car? Do you feel okay driving?”

“How has your car been driving?
Has the steering wheel been shaking?
Engine made any new noises?
Check engine light come on?”



TAKEAWAY
For more information, read
When Driving Is No Longer Safe

50%

By age 40, about 50% of the population will have or have had a mental illness.

Source: CMHA



Mental &
Emotional Health

Companionship and personal connections are critical

Taking care of your mental and emotional health greatly impacts quality of life. Your frame of mind and outlook on life colour all of your experiences. That's why it's critical to pay attention to your loved one's level of engagement with other people, inside and outside of your family.

Without companionship and regular personal interactions, a senior (or anyone for that matter) can become isolated and experience feelings of loneliness. If not addressed, this loneliness can lead to depression, causing them to withdraw even further. Along the way, they may stop taking proper care of themselves and their home. If you feel your loved one isn't getting the socialization required to be happy and healthy, address the issue quickly.



Mental & Emotional Health

Signs and symptoms of loneliness



Verbal acknowledgement
Seniors may mention that they rarely have people to talk to or would like to see friends and family more often



Undiagnosed illnesses
By bringing attention to undiagnosed and unexplained health issues, seniors may be seeking extra attention



Behavioural changes
Look for signs of social withdrawal or increased energy when in social situations (more talkative or physical contact)

Ways to encourage socialization



Companionship
Provide conversation/activities they enjoy; in-home care may be a beneficial option



Support
Encourage involvement with a senior center, YMCA, church, or other social organization



Transportation
Comfort Keepers can provide rides for seniors and transportation for daily activities



Technology
Introduce senior-friendly technology and teach them how to use social media and email



Happier at home

For many seniors, there is truly no place like home, where cherished memories of family and friends exist around every corner. That's why, when given a choice, most seniors would rather stay in their homes as they grow older. This is also known as aging in place.

While aging in place is preferred, the challenges of daily household tasks, like cleaning, yard work or basic repairs, can drive families to take unnecessary measures, such as seeking help from off-site facilities or assisted living communities.

However, there are cost-effective alternatives that enable seniors to preserve their independence. With in-home care, seniors can maintain hope and connectedness, and experience purpose and joy.





Determining care options

- What does your loved one want? What are their needs?
- Do you, your siblings or other relatives live close enough to provide or supervise care?
- Does your parent require regular medical care as well as assistance with activities of daily living?
- Do they need to move to get the help they need?
- Would they benefit from one-on-one interaction?
- How much help do they need?
- How much care can you realistically provide?
- What are your long-term plans?

Key areas of need to consider



Meal prep



Personal hygiene



Social interaction



Medical needs



Mobility



Home safety



Family support



Mental health





93%
of Canadian seniors
would prefer to age at
home.



Quality of life is our mission

At Comfort Keepers[®], two decades of service have shown us that care can transform a life for the better, create a lasting friendship, and elevate a person's spirit.

We provide in-home care services, technology, and advice that fit your family's needs today and evolve for tomorrow. We're here to help you.

Call us at (866) 363-0072

More resources

About Comfort Keepers®

FAQs about Home Care:
[ComfortKeepers.ca](https://www.comfortkeepers.ca)

The Comfort Keepers®
Difference:
[ComfortKeepers.ca](https://www.comfortkeepers.ca)

Interactive Caregiving:
[ComfortKeepers.ca](https://www.comfortkeepers.ca)

Types of Care:
[ComfortKeepers.ca](https://www.comfortkeepers.ca)

Senior Health Blog:
[ComfortKeepers.ca](https://www.comfortkeepers.ca)

Paying for Care:
[ComfortKeepers.ca](https://www.comfortkeepers.ca)

Activities

[Coloring pages](#)

[Word search](#)

[Trivia](#)

[Word scramble](#)

[Recipe cards](#)

Family Caregiver Resources

Info Center for
Caregiver Resources:
[ComfortKeepers.ca](https://www.comfortkeepers.ca)

Elderly Home Care
and Depression:
[ComfortKeepers.ca](https://www.comfortkeepers.ca)

Cost-Effective Option for
Aging in Place:
[ComfortKeepers.ca](https://www.comfortkeepers.ca)



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What's next?

To help you create an even clearer path forward, we've included links to some helpful resources that you can use to continue your research and make well-informed decisions.

If you ever have questions, or just want someone to talk to, please don't hesitate to reach out. Thanks for taking the time to read our guide, and remember to look for the joy in every moment of life.

(866) 363-0072

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