

WHEN TO STEP IN: AN ASSESSMENT TOOL

(This has been adapted from Careguide.Com: Elder Care Search)

Use this quiz to help determine if you should consider stepping in as a caregiver (or making arrangements for a caregiver).

1. If I were to leave the country tomorrow, would my loved one be self-sufficient?

- I would say, "Yes," with complete confidence.
- I would worry, but my loved one would be fine.
- I would have to hire someone to help my loved one a few hours each week.
- I would have to arrange for skilled nursing care.
- He/she cannot be left alone, so I cannot leave the country.

2. My loved one is in control of his/her mental faculties.

- He/she shows no signs of difficulty.
- He/she shows a little memory loss from time to time, but nothing serious.
- He/she needs assistance with bill paying.
- He/she sometimes forgets how to get home.
- His/her ability to make decisions is so poor that he/she is a danger to himself/herself.

3. My loved one is in control of his/her daily physical functioning.

- He/she is as active and healthy as ever.
- He/she needs some help getting out of bed.
- He/she has become increasingly dependent on a wheelchair.
- He/she needs more monitoring; has lost bladder and/or bowel control.

He/she is bedridden.

4. My loved one's medications are under control.

My loved one takes no medications.

My loved one takes only one or two mild medications.

My loved one has always been able to manage his/her medications but has recently become dizzy and confused.

I have to help my loved one keep track of his/her medications.

My loved one has been hospitalized because of drug interactions or overdosing by forgetting to take or making a mistake with medications.

5. My loved one is sociable and happy.

He/she is very active and happy.

He/she isn't as active as before a recent illness.

He/she doesn't go out or visit with friends as often since.

He/she is increasingly reluctant to leave the house.

He/she is depressed and housebound.

Look at your responses and consider where they fall in the spectrum from best case (top answers) to worst case (bottom answers). This will not only help you to determine if you need to step in, but what level of care you may need to procure for your loved one.