

Spring
2009

The Illuminator



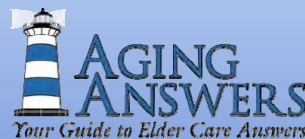
Laurel Felsenfeld,
BSN RN CRRN CCM

Agging Answers' Services:

- **Assessment** — to identify needs & support system
- **Referrals** — to services that best meet the client's needs, budget, personality and our high standards
- **Coordination** — arranging, evaluating, and revising the services
- **Transition Assistance** — for moves to assisted living or skilled care
- **Monitoring** — 24/7 support

Meet the Founder!

Laurel Felsenfeld, company founder and president, is a certified rehabilitation RN and case manager in practice since 1990 with personal experience from family members affected by Alzheimer's and multiple sclerosis. **2009 Recipient of the Oakland University Nightingale Award for Excellence in Community Nursing**



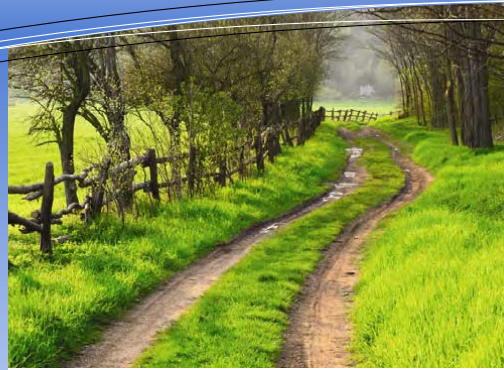
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Look-and-See Signs a Senior Needs Help

How to tell when the elderly need assistance to stay safe and comfortable at home

What today's seniors fear most is losing their independence. But what they're least likely to ask for is help. That's why it's often up to the children of aging parents, friends, neighbors, and service professionals to look for the signs that a senior needs assistance. This is a list of simple signs for families or concerned friends. Assisting seniors with a few basic tasks often means the difference between whether they stay at home or go to a facility. Senior's expectations for remaining at home are high. In a 2004 survey conducted by Home Instead Senior Care, 83% of seniors surveyed said they are very or somewhat likely to remain in their homes rather than move to a care facility.

SIGNS A SENIOR NEEDS HELP

1. An abundance of spoiled food in the refrigerator, freezer, or pantries, or food is sparse.
2. The senior's grocery list has little or no nutritional food on it. All 'meals' come from a can or box. Malnutrition may lead to weight loss, or weight gain from foods that are high in calories, but that have little nutritional value.
3. Excess dirt or dust in the home indicating an inability to conduct regular household tasks.
4. Dirty build up on high fans or ceiling because the senior can't reach to clean it properly. Caution seniors not to climb.

5. Unorganized books, newspapers, and magazines creating clutter and a fire hazard.

6. If floors and furniture have more noticeable food or drink stains on them than normal because of shaky hands or poor balance which causes spilled items. Check the house for tripping hazards.

Bruises on face, hands, arms, buttocks, or hips often mean that falls are occurring.

7. Forgotten bill payments or unanswered correspondence, or a pile of unopened mail.

8. Check medications to make sure they are being filled regularly and taken properly. The pharmacist can inform you when the prescription was last filled and how many tablets should be left if taken properly.

9. Dirty, unkempt clothing or neglecting personal hygiene.

10. Ask their neighbors and friends about their daily routine. Avoiding going out of the house is a warning sign. Answering the telephone, but not initiating outgoing telephone calls is another 'red flag'.

11. Missed appointments.

12. Noticeable weight loss or gain.

13. Neglect of home maintenance and repairs. Look for unkempt flower beds/shrubs, overflowing gutters, ceiling water stains, basement or crawlspace leaks/musty odor, etc.

14. Home safety hazards—cluttered pathways, throw rugs, overloaded electrical outlets, no smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, no emergency exit plan, no daily 'wellness check' phone call or emergency response system.

15. Recent fender benders or near misses, especially if involving entering traffic, or striking stationary objects or parked cars.

From the Senior Advocate- A Quarterly Publication Dedicated to the Well Being of Oakland County Seniors, Spring 2005 V3, I 1, "AARP: What Older Drivers Need to Know-How Does The Aging Process Affect Driving?" http://www.aarp.org/families/driver_safety/driver_ed/a2004-06-15-motorist_fa.html, and content by Laurel Felsenfeld BSN RN CRRN CCM.



Next Issue: Identity Theft
Home-bound elderly may be among most vulnerable