

When is it no longer safe for your loved one to live alone?

Continuing to live alone is a decision that affects the lives of many seniors and their families. It's important to research your options to make sure your family is making the most informed choice.

The University of Iowa College of Nursing developed a test — the Assessment for Risk of Living Alone — to help caregivers determine when additional assistance may be needed.

Calyx Living is proud to share this helpful tool that was designed to assess seniors who are having memory loss and related challenges. Answering these questions can help you be more confident in the decisions and environment you choose for your loved one.



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When Is Home Not Safe?

A Guide For Assessing The Risks Of The Elderly Living Alone

Developed by the University of Iowa College of Nursing

Please visit our website for more information about the community nearest you.

calyxseniorliving.com



Concerning behaviors and signs that additional care may be needed are listed below. The most pressing issues are first. Check all that apply.

A If one of these situations is present, the person should not be alone and needs help immediately:

- Weight loss of more than six pounds or 10 percent of body weight in six months, loose clothing, evidence of wasting, such as protruding bones.
- Agitated paranoia, hallucinations, delusions, suicidal thoughts, aggression.
- Weapons present, especially loaded.
- Evidence of fire or misuse of appliances, such as placing aluminum in a microwave.
- No food in house or only rancid food.
- Falling, especially when the person remains down more than two hours. Also, evidence of injuries, unexplained bruises, substance abuse.
- Medication mistakes or poor care for serious conditions.
- Reports that the person is neglecting basic care, such as medical treatment or is being abused.
- Repeated emergency room visits, hospitalizations, physical complaints.
- Evidence of domestic violence, including the person injuring a caregiver.
- Frequent calls to police or emergency services.
- Wandering outside the home.
- Eviction notice has been served.

A/B These behaviors could be classified as A or B behaviors, depending on how severe they seem to the reviewer:

- Malfunctioning plumbing, such as lack of water or a stopped-up toilet, when the person has caused the problem or neglected to get it fixed.
- Thermostat set inappropriately for weather conditions.
- Chronic anxiety or worry, panic attacks, depression.
- Unsafe driving with refusal to stop.
- Law enforcement officers ask that the person be evaluated because of repeated calls.

B If two or more of these behaviors are present, you may wait a few weeks, but should work toward providing care in the home or moving the person to another living situation:

- Poorly managed continence.
- Repeated calls to the family to ask what to do next or express concern about planned activities.
- Dirty or infested household that poses health risk.
- Accumulation of garbage.
- Food stored inappropriately, such as ice cream in a pantry.
- Person is being exploited by someone, such as a neighbor or relative.
- Resists personal care for long time periods.

B/C These behaviors could be classified as B or C behaviors, depending on how severe they seem to the reviewer:

- Person makes statements about needing to move or not being able to cope.

- Neighbors or others complain about person's dependence on them.
- Community members, such as neighbors, advise that help is needed.

C If some of these behaviors are present, especially three or more, consider giving the person help and re-evaluate monthly.

- Socially isolated behavior, such as sitting all day in front of the TV.
- Losing belongings, hiding things.
- Poor grooming, soiled clothing, wearing the same clothing all the time.
- Post-it notes throughout the house.

Source: G. Hall, A. Bossen and J. Specht, University of Iowa College of Nursing

Contact Calyx Living if you would like additional information about care alternatives. We can provide community resources and information about our Calyx communities to help simplify your search process. Calyx provides assisted living, memory care and respite care for seniors.

Our team welcomes the chance to support you as you research and evaluate care decisions for your loved one.

