**What are the signs it’s Time to Move to a Retirement Community**

**What are Four Signs I Need to Move into a Retirement Community**

How Do I Know When It’s Time to Move to a Retirement Home?

One of the most common questions are concerns for knowing when the right time to move into a retirement home will be.

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*What Should I Evaluate When Making My Decision?*

Bathing

Continence

Dressing

Feeding

Toileting

Transferring

Signs You May Just Need a Little Extra Help

Messy Living Space

Memory Issues

Difficulty Socializing

*Signs It May Be Time to Consider a Retirement Home*

Nearly Unlivable Home Conditions

Dangerously Forgetful

Social Isolation

**What Should I Evaluate When Making My Decision?**

It can be difficult to really take a look at our own health and welfare. However, a good place to start is by evaluating yourself on your Activities of Daily Living (ADLs).[Dr. Sidney Katz](https://consultgeri.org/try-this/general-assessment/issue-2.pdf) created the original set of categories in the 1950s, and they were expanded in the 1960s by[Elaine M. Brody, ACSW and M. Powell Lawton, PhD](http://www.eurohex.eu/bibliography/pdf/Lawton_Gerontol_1969-1502121986/Lawton_Gerontol_1969.pdf). Things that you feel independent with, give yourself a 1. For those that you feel like you are struggling with, give yourself a 0. For reference, independence means you can do them with no assistance, direction, or supervision. Dependence means you need assistance, direction, supervision or even total care in order to successfully complete the task.

**Bathing**

* Independence (1) - You can safely bathe alone or only need help with one body part (difficult to reach areas like the genitals or the back, or an extremity with a physical disability).
* Dependence (0) - You need help bathing more than one body part, or getting into or out of the bath/shower.

**Continence**

* Independence (1) - You have full control over both your urine and your bowels.
* Dependence (0) - You are experiencing either a partial or total loss of control of either your urine or your bowels (or both).

**Dressing**

* Independence (1) - You can pick out your own clothes and get dressed, complete with zippers or buttons. It is ok to need assistance with putting on and tying your shoes.
* Dependence (0) - You need help with any part of the dressing process with the exception of putting on and tying your own shoes.

**Feeding**

* Independence (1) - You can successfully get food from the plate to your mouth. The preparation of food by someone else is acceptable in this category.
* Dependence (0) - You need either partial or complete help feeding yourself, or require feeding in any way other than the traditional method.

**Toileting**

* Independence (1) - You are able to get yourself both onto and off of the toilet without help, and can wipe yourself without assistance.
* Dependence (0) - You are using a bedpan, or need help getting onto and off of the toilet and/or wiping yourself afterward.

**Transferring**

* Independence (1) - You can get into and out of beds and chairs without help. Mechanical assistance is acceptable.
* Dependence (0) - You need help getting into and out of beds and chairs.

 Add up your points. 6 points is the highest score you can achieve, which means you are totally independent. 0 is the lowest score, which means you are totally dependent on others to help you with your ADLs.

Scoring anywhere from 0 - 3 is a good sign that you’re ok living on your own a little bit longer (although you may need a little extra help). Higher scores, from 3 - 6, mean you should seriously start looking into retirement home options.

**Signs You May Just Need a Little Extra Help**

If you didn’t score solidly into either the independence or dependence category, you may still be wondering if a retirement home is right for you or if you just need a little extra help. Below are a few extra tips to help you make the best decision.

**Messy Living Space**

**‍**Let’s face it, we all feel a bit overwhelmed from time to time. One of the first things to go when we feel depressed or under the weather is our living space. This doesn’t always mean that you need to start planning the big retirement home move. First, take a good, honest look at how you’re feeling. If you’ve been significantly depressed lately, it may be time to look at your mental health and hire a therapist. If you have been feeling under the weather, make an appointment with your doctor to see if he or she can help you manage better. If it just seems like too much, consider hiring someone to simply come over and clean a few times a week until you feel up to it again. This can give you a little time and a little space to really see what’s going on that’s leading to a messy living space. Ultimately, you might decide you are ready to move to a retirement home. However, just having an untidy home shouldn’t always be a red flag.

**Memory Issues**

**‍**Having some memory issues don’t mean that you should start packing your things. Memory issues are a regular part of the aging process, but one that can be managed fairly easily (at least at the beginning). Try setting a new system to help you remember things like when bills are due, loved one’s birthdays, etc. You may just need a little help to jog your memory, and that’s ok. As long as you’re not having memory issues that are dangerous to your health or the safety of those around you, a little help may get you by.

**Difficulty Socializing**

**‍**In our later years, really bonding with new people or keeping strong bonds with those already in our lives can be hard. If you’re noticing your social life starting to slip, it may be time to try a new hobby or renew your interest in an existing one. Anything can be a social activity if you try - church, bingo, going to the grocery store, etc. 

**Signs It May Be Time To Consider a Retirement Home**

In addition to scoring high on the dependence scale of the ADLs, here are a few other factors to consider when making the decision on whether a move to a retirement home is necessary.

**Nearly Unlivable Home Conditions**

**‍**It may be difficult to truly see the state of our own homes, especially if we’re used to living in them the majority of the day. If you have taken a look around and realized that, not only have you let the housekeeping go, but you’re having to live around garbage on the floor and heaps of dishes in the sink… it may be time for you to start looking into a retirement home. Living alone can be tough but unsanitary living conditions are a danger to your health. If you don’t feel up to the challenge of taking care of a home any longer, a retirement community will give you the freedom to enjoy life without the stress and responsibility of all that space.

**Dangerously Forgetful**

**‍**No one wants to admit that their memory has gotten so bad it has become dangerous. But if you find yourself regularly getting lost when driving to the grocery store, or leaving the oven on all night, a retirement home may be a safer option for you.

**Social Isolation**

**‍**Complete social isolation can be one of the signs of Alzheimer’s. One of the first things to go is interest in friendship and even bonds with family. Although this is a slow process, or maybe because of it, many people don’t even notice it slipping away until they are totally socially isolated. A retirement home can help with both of those things, plus provide a good social calendar to keep you interested and engaged.

There aren’t any magic clues to help you know, without a doubt, that it is time for you to move into a retirement home. However, by truly evaluating how independent or dependent you are, you can start to get a better picture of whether you need to consider it, get some extra help, or if you can keep on the same way you have been. There is no shame in moving into a retirement home, especially when you can be the one making that decision for yourself. Good luck!

**SOURCE:** RetireFearless

<https://www.retirefearless.com/post/how-do-i-know-when-its-time-to-move-to-a-retirement-home>