

Signs It May Be Time for Assisted Living in Orange County

A practical worksheet for noticing patterns, organizing concerns and preparing for a care conversation.

Raya's Paradise | 101 Avenida Calafia, San Clemente, CA | (949) 420-9898 | rayasparadise.com

Parent or loved one:

Date reviewed:

Reviewed by:

Primary concern:

Current living situation:

Physician or care contact:

Status summary:

Next step:

How to use this checklist

Mark what you have observed. A pattern across multiple categories, even two or three items in several sections, is worth paying attention to and may be a reason to speak with a physician, care professional or licensed senior living provider.

Physical and Mobility

- Unexplained bruises, cuts or injuries that weren't mentioned
- A recent fall, even one described as "minor" or "no big deal"
- Difficulty getting up from chairs, the floor or the toilet without assistance
- Noticeably slower, shuffling or unsteady gait
- Scratches or dents on the car; reluctance to discuss driving
- Getting lost on familiar routes or expressing anxiety about driving
- Avoiding stairs, outdoor areas or certain parts of the home
- Signs of heat exhaustion, dehydration or excessive sun exposure

Notes

Cognitive and Memory

- Missed medications, doubled doses or inability to explain what medications are for
- Unpaid bills, duplicate payments or utilities shut off unexpectedly
- Forgotten medical appointments or confusion about scheduled events
- Repeating the same stories or questions within the same conversation
- Confusion about the day, month or year
- Unfamiliar financial activity: unusual purchases, unknown contacts, new "helpers"
- Difficulty following a familiar recipe or managing household routines they've done for years
- Noticeable changes in decision-making, judgment or personality

Notes

Home Safety

- Expired or rotting food in the refrigerator; pantry disorganization
- Burned pots, scorched surfaces or signs of a kitchen incident
- Strong household or personal odors that weren't present before
- Clutter, piles or trip hazards in walkways and hallways
- No grab bars or non-slip mat in the bathroom; a tub without a shower transfer option
- Broken fixtures, appliances or repairs that have gone unaddressed
- Mail or newspapers piling up inside or on the porch
- No emergency plan, no medical alert device and no way to call for help if injured alone
- Unsecured bookshelves, TVs or heavy furniture (seismic risk)

Notes

Social and Emotional

- No longer attending church, clubs, classes or regular activities
- Calling family members significantly less frequently than before
- Expressing hopelessness, indifference or "what's the point" statements
- Loss of interest in hobbies, grooming or things they used to care about
- Unable to name what they did last week or who they've spoken to recently
- Recent loss of a spouse, close friend or sibling with no support network in place
- No longer driving with no system to maintain social connections
- Unusual fearfulness, suspicion or paranoia that wasn't present before

Notes

Caregiver Wellbeing

- Missing work, personal obligations or your own health appointments to manage care
- Physical symptoms from sustained stress: disrupted sleep, frequent illness, weight changes
- Feeling resentful, trapped or unable to imagine any time that's truly your own
- No ability to plan a vacation, a weekend away or a sustained break
- Your relationship with your parent has become primarily about managing crises
- Siblings are unavailable, unwilling or geographically distant and you're carrying it alone
- You've started to dread the calls and visits rather than look forward to them

Notes

Decision Snapshot

Categories with the most checked items:

Most urgent concern to discuss:

Person to contact next:

Appointment, consultation or tour date:

Questions to ask a care professional:

How to read this

If you checked 3 or more items in any single category, consider speaking with a physician, care professional or licensed senior living provider. If you checked items across multiple categories, scheduling a care consultation or community tour may be a reasonable next step. This checklist is not a diagnosis; it is a starting point for a conversation.

Important Disclaimer

This checklist is provided for general informational and organizational purposes only. It is not medical, legal, financial, clinical, emergency or other professional advice.

It should not replace a personalized care plan, a physician evaluation, licensed professional guidance or emergency services. Assisted living needs, health conditions, safety risks and family circumstances vary by individual, so this checklist should be adapted to the person and situation being considered.

For sudden confusion, chest pain, serious injury, suspected stroke symptoms, suicidal statements or immediate danger, call 911 or seek urgent medical care. For concerns about cognitive decline, fall risk, medication safety, caregiver burnout, elder financial exploitation or care placement, speak with a qualified healthcare professional, licensed care provider or appropriate agency.

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Raya's Paradise is a licensed senior living community in San Clemente, CA, serving Orange County families with assisted living, memory care, respite care and hospice support. Boutique coastal care with more than 30 years of experience behind it.

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