

FAMILY CARE · FREE CHECKLIST

CARING FOR AN AGING PARENT CHECKLIST

The First Things to Sort Out

FREE
CHECKLIST

HEALTH · HOME SAFETY · PAPERS · FAMILY

10

FIRST STEPS

4

CHECKLISTS

5

ROOMS

1

FAMILY PLAN

FOR THE FIRST WEEKS OF HELPING A PARENT

Caring for an *Aging Parent* Checklist

The first things to sort out when Mom or Dad starts to need help: their health facts, a safer home, the important papers and a plan for the family. Built on checklists from the CDC, the National Institute on Aging and Medicare. Organizing only: no medical, legal or financial advice.

The first ten steps

START HERE

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| ☐ | 1. Talk with your parent | Ask what they want and what worries them. Their wishes come first. |
| ☐ | 2. Write the medicine list | Every prescription, over-the-counter medicine, vitamin and supplement. |
| ☐ | 3. Collect the doctors | Names, phone numbers, the pharmacy, the patient portal. |
| ☐ | 4. Copy the cards | Insurance, Medicare and ID: front and back. |
| ☐ | 5. Find the advance directive | Living will and health care proxy, or plan to make them. |
| ☐ | 6. Make a fridge sheet | Conditions, allergies, medicines, doctors, emergency contacts. |
| ☐ | 7. Walk through the home | Floors, stairs, bathroom, bedroom, kitchen, with the CDC list. |
| ☐ | 8. Find the papers | Where the will, powers of attorney, deeds and accounts are kept. |
| ☐ | 9. Share the jobs | Who does medicines, rides, shopping, bills and calls. |
| ☐ | 10. Plan your own support | Who covers for you, and when you rest. |



TEN MINUTES

A cup of tea and the monthly review: medicines, contacts, the family's jobs.



Health checklist

COUNTS ITSELF

Medicare's discharge planning checklist starts with one thing: a full list of every prescription, over-the-counter medicine, vitamin and herbal supplement. So does this one.

- ☐ Medicine list with doses and times, kept up to date
- ☐ Allergies written down
- ☐ Main doctor, specialists and pharmacy with phone numbers
- ☐ Insurance and Medicare cards copied
- ☐ Health conditions and past operations listed
- ☐ Glasses, hearing aids and dentures checked
- ☐ Next appointments in one calendar
- ☐ Advance directive copied to the doctor and the proxy

Done so far

CALL 911 FOR

- Chest pain or trouble breathing
- A face that droops, or a sudden weak arm or leg
- Sudden confusion or trouble speaking
- A fall with a head injury, or they cannot get up



FRESH AIR

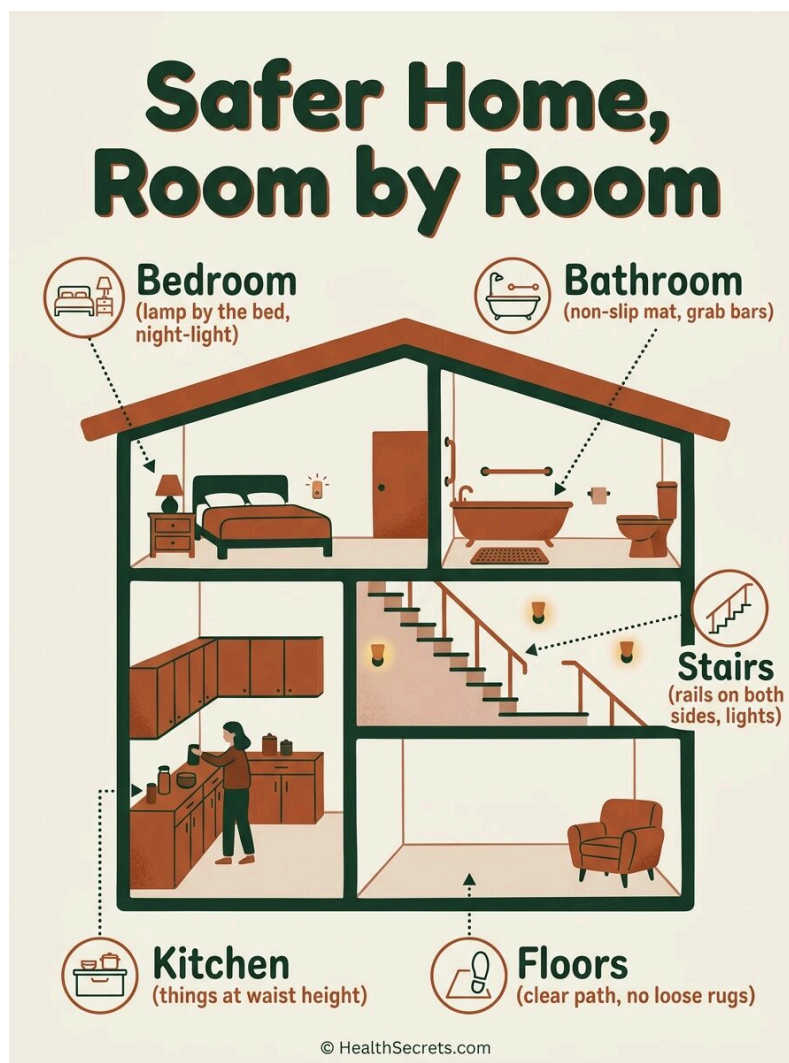
A few minutes outside, together or alone, is part of the day too.

Home safety checklist

The CDC's "Check for Safety" checklist notes that falls are often due to hazards that are easy to overlook but easy to fix. These are its main fixes. Walk through the home together.

- ☐ Clear paths: no furniture, cords or clutter to walk around
- ☐ No throw rugs, or rugs fixed with tape or a non-slip backing
- ☐ Stairs: lights at top and bottom, rails on both sides
- ☐ Kitchen: everyday things at waist height
- ☐ Bathroom: non-slip mat in the tub or shower, grab bars
- ☐ Bedroom: a lamp within reach, a night-light to the bathroom
- ☐ Shoes worn inside, not bare feet or slippers
- ☐ Emergency numbers in large print near each phone

Done so far



Papers and family checklist

The National Institute on Aging suggests putting important papers and copies of legal documents in one place. Note where each one is, never the passwords. This is not legal advice.

PAPERS

☐ Will (where the signed original is)

☐ Durable power of attorney for finances

☐ Living will

☐ Durable power of attorney for health care (health care proxy)

☐ Bank, pension and Social Security details

☐ Insurance policies: life, long-term care, home, car

☐ Deed, mortgage or rental agreement

☐ Permission forms so the doctor and bank can talk to you

Done so far

THE FAMILY PLAN

☐ A weekly call to share out the jobs

☐ One person who takes calls from doctors and hospitals

☐ A shared list of costs and who paid

☐ A back-up for each job

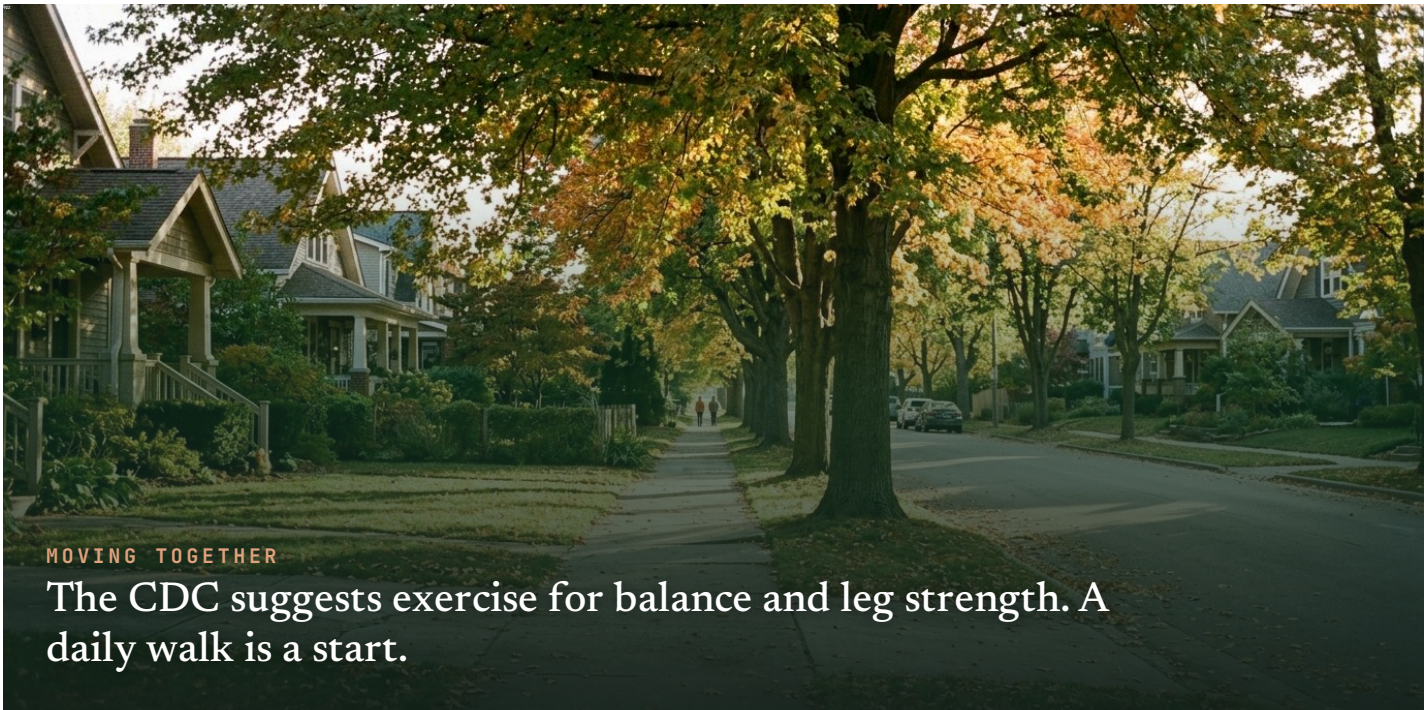
☐ A plan for a hospital stay: who goes, who looks after the home

☐ Time off for the main caregiver

Done so far

AND YOU

The Family Caregiver Alliance puts it simply: when your own needs are taken care of, the person you care for benefits too. Plan your rest the way you plan their care.



From a checklist to a binder

This checklist gets you started. **The Caring for a Parent Binder** holds everything that follows: the fridge sheet, every medicine and change, the care team, visit logs, hospital stays, the family's jobs and shared costs, the home walk-through and where the papers are. **The Caregiver Daily Log Book** gives whoever is with your parent one page a day.

THE CARING FOR A PARENT BINDER

- Emergency grab-and-go sheet
- Medicine list and change log
- Care team directory and 4 visit logs
- Hospital stay and discharge pages
- Family check-in and shared costs
- Home safety walk-through and paper locator

SEE THE BINDER →

THE CAREGIVER DAILY LOG BOOK

- 90 large-print daily pages
- Medicines given, meals, cups of fluid, mood
- A handoff note for the next carer
- 13 weekly summaries for the doctor

SEE THE LOG BOOK →

SOURCES • FACT-CHECKED BY THE HEALTH SECRETS EDITORIAL TEAM

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, STEADI. Check for Safety: A Home Fall Prevention Checklist for Older Adults	Home checklist
National Institute on Aging. Getting Your Affairs in Order Checklist (updated July 2026)	Papers checklist
Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Your discharge planning checklist. CMS Product No. 11376, December 2025	Medicine list, hospital plan
Family Caregiver Alliance. Taking Care of YOU: Self-Care for Family Caregivers	Support for the caregiver



SAFER HOME

Everyday things at waist height, and a step stool with a bar to hold.

THIS WEEK

Start with one page. *Then share it.*

01 • HEALTH

Medicines, doctors, allergies on paper.

02 • HOME

Clear paths, rails and lights.

03 • PAPERS

Know where each one is.

THE NEXT STEP



The Caring for a Parent Binder

This checklist gets you started. The binder holds everything that follows: the fridge sheet, medicines, visits, hospital stays, the family's jobs and costs.

- Grab-and-go sheet and medicine list
- Visit logs and hospital pages
- Family check-in and shared costs

[SEE THE BINDER →](#)

Keep reading on healthsecrets.com

FREE • FACT-CHECKED GUIDES

MEDICINES AND SUPPLEMENTS

Supplement Interactions: What Not to Take Together

Which supplements and medicines can clash, and what to check with the pharmacist.

healthsecrets.com/supplements/supplement-interactions-guide →

SUPPLEMENT SAFETY

Supplement Safety Guide: Myths, Risks and Precautions

How supplements are regulated, what can go wrong, and practical steps before taking one.

healthsecrets.com/supplements/supplement-safety-guide →

BRAIN HEALTH

Cognitive Aging | How to Keep Your Brain Young

What research on aging and the brain looks at: activity, food, learning, company and sleep.

healthsecrets.com/longevity/cognitive-aging-brain-young →

MEMORY

Memory Improvement: 15 Science-Backed Strategies

Practical memory strategies, from spaced repetition to sleep and activity.

healthsecrets.com/mental-wellness/memory-improvement-strategies...



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[Read the supplement interactions guide →](#)

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