

ADL Checklist

(Activities of Daily Living)

What are ADLs?

Activities of Daily Living, or ADLs, are basic self-care tasks you do every day, including bathing, toileting, and eating. Difficulties with these tasks often correspond to how much assistance or hands-on care a senior may need.

Use the checklist below to assess your senior loved one's functioning level as it relates to ADLs to help determine the level of care that suits their unique needs. For each activity, check the box next to the task level your loved one is capable of doing. At the end of the assessment, add up your points to determine your loved one's level of independence.



Bathing and Showering

- +4 Bathes self thoroughly and completely on their own
- +3 Needs some assistance washing a hard-to-reach area of the body but can otherwise bathe independently
- +2 Needs assistance bathing more than one part of the body or getting in and out of the tub or shower
- +1 Requires full assistance in the bath or shower

Continence

- +4 Demonstrates complete self-control over urination and defecation
- +3 Has had an accident, but typically demonstrates normal bladder control
- +2 Often has noticeable accidents or bed wetting
- +1 Completely incontinent of bowel or bladder

Dressing

- +4 Can choose outfits and get dressed
- +3 Needs some assistance getting dressed, such as help fastening buttons or tying shoelaces, but can otherwise dress and choose proper garments independently
- +2 Can choose outfits, but needs full assistance dressing and undressing
- +1 Cannot dress or choose proper garments on their own

Mobility

- +4 Can walk and climb stairs independently or while carrying a walking aid
- +3 Needs supervision or help from another person while walking or climbing stairs
- +2 Fully depends on a wheelchair; must use ramp instead of stairs
- +1 Immobile; cannot walk, use stairs, or operate wheelchair without full assistance

Transferring (getting in and out of furniture)

- +3 Can easily walk or transfer from one place to another; can move in and out of a bed or chair on their own
- +2 Needs some assistance transferring, such holding onto a grab bar or holding another person's arm for stability
- +1 Cannot transfer on their own at all; requires full personal assistance or the use of mechanical transfer aids

Feeding (excluding meal preparation)

- +4 Gets food from plate to mouth without help
- +3 Needs partial assistance with feeding; another person must set up the plate or cut the food into bites for them
- +2 Requires full assistance with feeding; another person or machine must prepare the plate and deliver the food to their mouth for them
- +1 Requires parenteral feeding

Toileting

- +4 Can get on and off toilet, arrange clothes, and clean self without help
- +3 Needs some assistance transferring to the toilet, but can otherwise arrange clothes and clean self without help
- +2 Requires complete assistance toileting; another person must help them get on and off the toilet, arrange their clothes, and clean their genital area for them
- +1 Requires the use of a bedpan or commode

Add up the scores Total Points _____

The higher the score on this assessment, the more independent your loved one is. If your loved one's score is below 20, or if you've noticed a drastic decline in their score from previous assessments, it may be time to consult with a medical professional about increasing your loved one's level of support. Consider reaching out to an A Place for Mom [Senior Living Advisor](#) to discover the care option that's right for you.

The information contained in this checklist is for informational purposes only and is not intended to constitute medical advice or diagnosis. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health care provider regarding any medical condition or treatment, and never disregard professional medical advice or delay treatment based on anything you have read on this checklist. Links to third-party websites are only for the convenience of the reader; A Place for Mom does not offer blanket endorsements of the contents of third-party sites.