



The Skills You Need to Age in Place

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, aging in place is “the ability to live in one’s own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level.” Eighty-eight percent of Americans between 50-80 years old believe that aging in place is important, but many will need assistance to continue to live independently. What abilities must you or your loved ones need to live safely and independently? The healthcare community identifies these activities of daily living (ADLs) as the skills a person needs to care for themselves:

Instrumental ADLs

- Managing transportation, either via driving or by organizing other means of transport.
- Managing finances: paying bills and managing financial assets.
- Shopping and meal preparation.
- Housecleaning and home maintenance.
- Managing communication with others: telephone, mail, digital correspondence.
- Managing medications: obtain medications and take them as directed.

Basic ADLs

- The ability to move from one position to another and walk independently.
- The ability of a person to feed oneself.
- The ability to select appropriate clothes and to put the clothes on.
- The ability to bathe and groom oneself and maintain dental hygiene and nail and hair care.
- The ability to control bladder and bowel function.
- The ability to get to and from the toilet, use it appropriately, and clean oneself.

**This information comes from the National Library of Medicine, retrieved at www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK470404*

People unable to perform some of these ADLs are often able to continue living independently with support. Knowing the areas in which you or your loved one needs assistance makes aging in place more possible, and gives seniors and their family members peace of mind.

If you have concerns about either yourself or a loved one being able to care for themselves, reach out to your doctor or local senior support center for help. They can assess ADLs and recommend interventions to help you and your loved ones age in place safely and confidently.

Sources:

- bit.ly/ruralhealthtoolkit
- bit.ly/betterhealthwhileaging
- bit.ly/healthyagingpool

To learn more about aging in place and explore support and resources, connect with the following resources:

Eldercare Locator
800-677-1116
eldercarelocator@n4a.org
www.eldercare.acl.gov

USAgging
202-872-0888
info@usaging.org
www.usaging.org

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
800-633-4227
877-486-2048 (TTY)
www.cms.gov
www.medicare.gov

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