



Gadgets and Tools to Help Your Parents Age in Place

Aging in place is a new approach to eldercare. It allows the elderly to remain in their own homes as they age, rather than having to be moved to a nursing home or assisted living facility. To enable aging in place, there are many gadgets and tools in the market that make it possible for your aging parents to remain independent and self-reliant. The gadgets assist your parent by making up for deficiencies they may have.

Hearing Gadgets

Most aging parents suffer from some kind of hearing loss, whether it is minor or profound. To enable them to age in place and adapt to challenges with hearing, there is everything from a vibrating watch that reminds them when to take medications to hearing devices that amplify sound to visual and vibrating alerts for telephone and fire alarms.

Vision Gadgets

Even if your parent does not suffer from a disabling condition like macular degeneration, deteriorating eye sight is another struggle most senior people experience that affect their lifestyle. When glasses, and bifocals and trifocals are not enough, there are magnifying glasses available that will enable your parent to read newspapers and prescription instructions, as well as large print versions of newspapers and books. There are also magnifying screens and softwares available for computers and TVs. Improving the lighting in your parent's home is important as well.

Safety Gadgets

If your parent has a desire to age in place, there are many things you can do to help him or her remain independent. Slipping and falling, whether from an accident or from any kind of decreased mobility, is a concern to all adult children who care for their aging and sometimes ailing parents. If your parent's home has multiple levels, you may be able to concentrate their living space on one level, shifting their bedroom closer to the kitchen and bathroom. If you have the resources, you can have elevators installed to allow your parent to move safely from floor to floor. Exchanging tubs for walk-in showers, adding railing in the tub, near the toilet, and in hallways, and making sure rugs and stairs are slip-proof can reduce the risk of slipping and falling.

If your parent has early signs of dementia or simply forgets to do things, there are medication organizers with timer alarms that remind him or her when to take medications. You can install a programmable thermostat so that your parent doesn't have to remember to adjust the heat or cooling system to coincide with the weather. You can even install a sensor monitoring system that follows activities without invading a person's privacy, but allows you to keep track of your parent's movement and be alerted in case of a problem.

Living independently, outside of a nursing home or skilled nursing facility, is a goal for most aging parents. Unless your parent is suffering from something like late-stage Alzheimer's disease, requiring 24-hour monitoring; most aging parents can use technology – gadgets and tools – to remain at home. From cell phones to specially designed kitchen tools with special grip

handles, there are modification methods to suit to every facet of your parent's life that will enable aging in place.