

Checklist:

Caring for Your Loved One at Home

You can review and update this list based on your loved one's needs and changes in their recovery.

Home safety

- Remove fall hazards (loose rugs, clutter, cords, poor lighting).
- Install grab bars in bathrooms and railings on stairs.
- Use non-slip mats in showers and bathrooms and stair gates at the top and bottom of stairs.
- Consider adaptive equipment (shower chair, raised toilet seat, bed rails, wheelchair ramp, walk-in bathtub).
- Label rooms, drawers, or other household items.
- Lock away sharp objects, cleaning supplies, or medications (when appropriate).
- Post emergency numbers in a visible spot.

Medical needs

- Use a medication tracker, pill organizer, blister packs, or medication alarms.
- Hang a whiteboard calendar or use phone reminders for medical and therapy appointments.
- Set up and learn how to use any necessary medical equipment.
- Have a blood pressure cuff, thermometer, and other monitoring tools on hand.
- Learn first aid and have a first aid kit with seizure instructions (if relevant).
- Install a backup power source for medical equipment (if used).
- Create a plan for managing behavioral changes or crises.
- Have a "go bag" in case of emergency medical visits.

Daily care

- Create a routine or schedule to help provide structure for your loved one.
- Keep a journal or log to track symptoms, mood, sleep, and therapy progress.
- Look into meal delivery options or recipes for easy-to-make meals and snacks.
- Use adaptive utensils or cups as needed.
- Keep to a consistent sleep schedule.
- Plan for daily activity (short walks, stretching) if approved by the medical team.

Emotional and social support

- Participate in support groups with other caregivers (in-person or virtual).
- Do relaxing activities and schedule time with friends and loved ones.
- Establish a back-up plan if you are unable to provide care for your loved one.

“We moved furniture and rugs so there is a clear path for walking, keeping a chair in the kitchen for rest when needed, borrowed equipment from my local DME closet such as a shower bench, and adjusted our smartphone, TVs, and computer to dark mode.”