

5 Things to Do Immediately After Moving Your Parent Into Assisted Living

A simple, real-life guide for adult children navigating this transition.



Moving a parent into assisted living is a lot.
Emotionally, mentally, physically—it's not a small moment.

And in the middle of all the paperwork, decisions, and emotions, most of us assume everything is set up the way it should be.

I did too.

But what I've learned both personally and from so many others walking this same road is this:

The first few days and weeks matter more than you think.

These five steps aren't complicated... but they are the ones most people skip. And they can make a real difference in your parent's safety and care.

1. Confirm the Care Plan

Don't assume it's right.

Care plans are often created quickly during intake, and important details can easily be missed or misunderstood.

Take the time to:

- Go through it line by line
- Make sure mobility, fall risk, and cognitive needs are clearly noted
- Confirm what help your parent is actually receiving day-to-day

Ask:

“What does a typical day look like for my parent here?”

Why this matters:

If the care plan is off, everything that follows can be off too.

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2. Meet the Caregivers on Shift

These are the people who are actually caring for your parent.

Not just the administrators the real, day-to-day caregivers.

Make it a point to:

- Introduce yourself
- Learn names and faces
- Show up at different times:
 - Weekdays
 - Evenings
 - Weekends

Because here's the truth:

Staffing can look very different outside of weekday hours.

Why this matters:

Connection builds communication and communication builds better care.

3. Double-Check Medications

This is one of the biggest areas where mistakes can happen.

Transitions are where things get missed changes in dosage, timing, or even medications themselves.

Please don't skip this.

Go over:

- What your parent was taking before
- What they are being given now
- Dosages and timing

Ask how medications are managed and tracked.

Why this matters:

Medication errors aren't small they can have serious consequences.

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4. Walk the Room for Safety

Take a step back and look at the room with fresh eyes.

Even spaces that seem “fine” can have risks.

Look for:

- Trip hazards (rugs, cords, clutter)
- Lighting—especially at night
- Bathroom safety (grab bars, non-slip surfaces)
- Bed height and ease of movement

Why this matters:

Falls are one of the most common—and preventable—reasons for injury.

5. Set a Communication Routine with Staff

Don’t wait and wonder—set this up early.

Having a clear communication rhythm will ease your stress more than you expect.

Set:

- A main point of contact
- A plan for regular updates (weekly is ideal)
- How urgent issues will be communicated

Why this matters:

When communication is consistent, small issues don’t turn into big ones.

If you’re in this phase right now, I want you to hear this:

You’re not supposed to have all the answers.

Most of us are figuring this out as we go.

But these five steps?

They help you stay one step ahead.

They help you advocate.

They help you protect.

They help you breathe a little easier knowing you’ve covered what matters most.

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Use this page for notes

Disclaimer

I'm sharing this from personal experience and from being in the middle of this journey alongside so many others but every situation is different.

This guide is meant to support you, not replace professional advice. Always consult with medical providers, legal professionals, or care teams when making decisions for your parent's specific needs.

Take what fits, ask questions, and trust yourself as you navigate this.