



## How to Find the Right Assisted Living Facility for Your Loved One!

Finding that special assisted living community for Mom or Dad is one of the most important decisions you can make. Listed below are some helpful tips for choosing an assisted living facility. As you are learning about assisted living and touring facilities use these tips and hints to find out the true quality of care your loved one will receive.

### TIP #1 CLEAN AS A WHISTLE

Is the community fresh and clean? Look past the furnishings and into the corners, baseboards and windows. Ask how often housekeeping is provided in each apartment/room. What services does maintenance provide: What is the facility's response time to housekeeping and maintenance issues? What about laundry services?

### TIP #2 FOLLOW YOUR NOSE

Odors may indicate a lack of cleanliness, or a temporary problem that was caused by a recent incident. If you find odors in a concentrated area, this may indicate a single incident. Odors throughout the facility may indicate a problem. Ask the manager what they believe to be the source of the odor before proceeding.

### TIP #3 BUSY RESIDENTS ARE HAPPY RESIDENTS - ACTIVITIES

Ask to watch activities. Are they well attended? Does the staff seem involved, and does the activity seem to be well matched to the residents' cognitive and physical abilities? View the community event calendar. Do the activities match your loved one's interests? Look at the variety of activities listed. Are there small and large group activities, trips, or outings? Inquire about religious services if this is important. Many facilities will have a resident council who serves as the voice of the resident population. Does such a council exist so that residents can express their concerns or opinions about activities, staff, meals, etc?

### TIP #4 FIND THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Everyone wants to go outside on a beautiful day. Investigate the outside areas for residents. Does it feel inviting, safe, and secure? Find out if the staff uses the same area for breaks. What sort of activities are hosted outdoors? Do residents have the ability to wander outside on their own free will, or will staff members accompany them for safety?

## TIP #5 CARE WITH DIGNITY

As you tour, ask a lot of questions about personal care. Look at current residents. Are they clean-shaven, with well-groomed hair and nails? Are the residents dressed appropriately? Discuss bathing options, and your loved one's preferences. Will care plans allow for fluctuations in the resident's requests? Does the staff always treat residents with respect and a smile?

## TIP #6 WHISTLE WHILE THEY WORK

Staff attitude, friendliness, and sense of respect are of utmost importance. Observe the staff interacting with the current residents. Do they listen and make eye contact? Did you feel welcomed on your tour not only by your tour guide, but by all staff? If you felt welcomed, then chances are your loved one will too. Make sure to get a good understanding of the staffing pattern. How many people are truly involved in your loved one's care? What are the staff-to-resident ratios throughout the day and night? Introduction to the management team of the facility will help you to understand the goals of the community. How accessible is the management team for resident and family concerns? Do you have confidence in management's style, expertise, and experience?

## TIP #7 CHOICES, CHOICES, CHOICES

The dining experience is very important to seniors. Discuss daily entree choices, menu rotation, and dining hours and procedures. Is there assigned seating, or are residents free to sit with whom they choose? How often are meals or snacks made available for the residents? Bring your loved one in for a meal to taste the food, and meet some of the residents. Observe how residents who are unable to feed themselves are cared for. Discuss what happens if a resident cannot make it to the dining room for a meal.

## TIP #8 SAFE AND SOUND

Safety and security features are very important in senior care. Is the facility secured so that wanderers cannot easily escape the building? Is the facility fully wheelchair accessible should your loved one use a wheelchair either now or in the future? What other safety features are available in the apartment and throughout the community? How does the resident alert staff when they need help while in their apartment? How often are residents checked upon while in their room? Ask about the staffing pattern to understand who will be on-site to assist your loved one. How many licensed nurses and staff members are there? What are the staffing patterns during the night versus the daytime? How are medications managed?

## TIP #9 WHEN IT'S TIME TO LEAVE

Senior health depends heavily on stability. No resident likes to move a lot. Ask about specific move-out criteria. Under what circumstances is a resident asked to move out? What type of notice is given by them or you? In many cases, a 30-day notice is required. What are the procedures in the case of a death? What about end-of-life care? Will this facility be the last one your loved one will ever have to move to? Does the facility willingly coordinate end-of-life care with home health and hospice agencies to extend the time the resident can reside in the facility?

## Tip #10: TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS

Can you imagine you or your loved one living there and being comfortable? Did you feel at ease while touring? Was the staff friendly and inviting? The property doesn't have to be the most beautiful to be the best place for them to live comfortably! Follow your instincts and your heart.

## Tip #11: LOOK FOR CONSISTENCY

Make sure to visit the facility at unexpected times. Stop in two or three times before you make your final decision. Be sure to visit on the weekend and in the evenings, times when the administrative staff is usually not there, to see how things run 24/7. Is it consistent?



For more useful tips and suggestions to help you find the right Assisted Living Facility for your loved-one go to:

[www.CarringtonCourtAL.com](http://www.CarringtonCourtAL.com)

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