

How Can Home Care Change for Loved Ones Following a Stroke?

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After surviving a stroke, your elderly loved one has a different set of care priorities. Maybe your mom, dad, or other family members have lost mobility after being partially paralyzed, and the need for your assistance has spiked considerably. At first, perhaps you were only needed for necessities like grocery shopping. But post-stroke, your aging senior requires more intensive support as there are many risk factors involved when it comes to daily living. For bathing and grooming, he or she may need an extra level of assistance. And as you manage your own household and career, caring for Mom or Dad can get out of hand fast. To relieve yourself and your senior, seeking an in-home care facility may be the best choice for you and your family.

[Care for a Stroke Survivor](#)

In a healthy brain, blood flow delivers oxygen to its cells. But during a stroke, the brain's blood supply gets temporarily cut off. The shutdown causes vital brain cells to die. The brain damage leads to loss of control over memory and muscle movements.

Your elderly stroke patient faces many physical and mental challenges which alter their medical condition. Depending on how severe the brain damage was, stroke recovery result in minor to significant mobility and cognitive issues. Stroke recovery for the survivor may face the following warning signs:

- Weakness in an arm or leg
- Memory loss
- Partial paralysis of the face
- Difficulty or loss of ability to speak
- Paralysis to one side of the body

Be prepared to provide extensive care for your recovering loved one. Care in the aftermath of a

stroke can quickly become much harder than you think. You will have to plan the logistics for your senior's basic routine. The stroke survivor may need help with everyday daily activities: showering, dressing, eating a healthy diet, bathroom breaks, basic communication, and physical activity. He or she quickly becomes utterly dependent on you. Meantime, as tricky as it may be, you must be prepared should your elderly loved one remain permanently impaired.

"Some people recover completely from strokes, but more than 2/3 of survivors will have some type of disability," according to the National Stroke Association.

One family caregiver won't be enough to take care of the stroke survivor in the long-term. Therefore, seeking caregiver support may be your best option. After a stroke, your loved one needs a care plan that's sustainable, because burnout can interfere with your own life. The National Center on Caregiving states: "...most family caregivers are ill-prepared for their role and provide care with little or no support, yet more than one-third of caregivers continue to provide intense care to others while suffering from poor health themselves." Hiring a skilled nursing facility with reliable healthcare professionals will allow your stroke patient to recover in the quickest way they can.

You Must Reduce the Chance of Hospital Readmission

The first month after hospital discharge is critical. It's time to focus on stabilization, so your loved one doesn't go back. "Among seniors on Medicare, roughly 20 percent of patients, discharged, end up in the hospital again within 30 days of leaving. Elderly adults have a lower chance of recovery if they are re-hospitalized again within the 30-day period, which is why reducing hospital readmissions is so important."

Your elderly loved one wants to stay in the comfort of the home and age in place, but the road to recovery can be daunting, which is why home health care could be the answer. Because of the physical changes that occur in the brain after a stroke, survivors may experience increased levels of anxiety, anger, and depression on top of the physical ailments they might face. Finding a physical therapist who focuses on stroke rehabilitation is critical when it comes to a fast recovery. And you may not be equipped to deal with the intense negative emotions afflicting your stroke survivor, making an already difficult task much harder.

When the responsibility for your loved one has fallen on your shoulders, there are essential things you should know:

- Recovery for a stroke survivor is a lifelong process. It's a myth to think the survivor will make a rapid recovery, per the National Stroke Association.
- Stroke is the fifth-ranked leading cause of death in the United States and is a significant cause of severe disability for adults, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Strokes are preventable up to 80%.

The care decisions you make for your elderly loved one will determine the trajectory of the healing process. But what's most important here is the grim reality. When your senior loved one has a stroke, the need for constant care can radically intensify.

Help to Prevent Another Stroke

When your loved one has suffered a stroke, a professional rehabilitation facility and healthcare team can be of enormous help. A professional caregiver can fill in the gaps for daily personal care. Without hygiene assistance, your senior stroke survivor may remain less able to bathe or get dressed properly. But a trained professional has the skills to restore dignity to daily self-care for your recovering senior.

"Home care complements existing health care services, alleviating pressure on the overall system, allowing more traditional models of care to work and do what they do best," according to a joint report by the Home Care Association of America and Global Coalition on Aging.

If your elderly loved one has a chronic illness like diabetes or high blood pressure, a professional caregiver can actively monitor the disease. With proper monitoring, the senior stroke survivor can eat healthier meals and drinks, take necessary medication and perform light exercises if possible. These efforts directly help prevent another stroke, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Should the stroke survivor show symptoms of a health issue, you will be promptly notified and receive a follow-up. The professional caregiver performs only non-medical duties; however, the skilled assistant can be the first to notice signs that something is wrong and call for help. It's peace of mind you can't get any other way, especially considering the heightened difficulty of your loved one's care.

The help a home care case manager goes beyond physical tasks, too. For example, after a stroke, your elderly loved one may have more difficulty speaking because of facial paralysis which is why the combination of occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech therapy is essential. During this time, it's helpful to show the stroke survivor ways to stay connected. An experienced caregiver can practice online social skills with your senior to help him stay connected.

Now that you know the benefits of home care professionals, it's time to share with your elderly loved one. Here at Comfort Keepers Ft. Myers, we have an outstanding staff of caregivers who will tend to your loved ones wants and needs. Call us today at (239) 900-9771 to learn more about our role in after stroke home care.

[Comfort Keepers Services](#) Southwest Florida

If you are reaching the point where you need a companion for your elderly loved one or need senior care services, look to Comfort Keepers in Ft. Myers! We offer a multitude of services from

respite care to dementia care. We also provide concierge services at some assisted living facilities in Lee and Collier counties. Contact us today for a free consultation!

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