

Tips For Caregiving: Doing Laundry

As our loved one's age, simple household chores can become increasingly difficult.

Laundry can quickly become a hazardous task for our loved ones to perform on their own.

Here are some tips to help your loved one maintain their laundry, a small but important step toward retaining independence.

- **Make sure the laundry room is as accessible as possible.** It is best if the laundry room is on the main floor; this prevents your loved one from having to carry loads of laundry down to the basement within their laundry room, and tape down or remove any rugs or mats that could be tripping hazards. Detergent and other cleaners should be in close, easy to reach locations, and easy to open containers.
- **Consider changing to front-loading washers and dryers.** These types of appliances are easier on your loved one's back and require less reaching and movement when loading and unloading clothes.
- **If your loved one has vision problems, look for a washer and dryer with extra-large knobs, buttons and displays.** If you don't want to invest in new appliances, place colored stickers or other markers on the different settings.
- **Buy your loved one a rolling cart or hamper to transfer clothes more easily.** Having a cart to move clothes between washer and dryer and from the laundry room to closet helps alleviate the risk of your loved one hurting themselves.
- **Install an ironing board that folds down from the wall.** Ironing boards that need to be set up and taken down after each use are heavy and not practical for your aging loved one.
- **If your loved one can no longer safely do laundry on their own, many companies offer laundry services.** If you are not able to take on the task of laundry for them, investigate in-home help to assist your loved one.
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