

# Activities of Daily Living



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- 1) **Activities of Daily Living (ADLs)** are the metrics for how much and what type of care your loved one needs at any given time. These include eating, bathing, dressing, toileting, and transferring.
- 2) **These are different** from “Instrumental Activities of Daily Living” (IADLs) which are things like bill paying, cooking, cleaning, driving etc.
- 3) **Why measure Activities of Daily Living?** To know where your loved one falls on the care continuum and to pinpoint care solutions. To go “on claim” for long term care insurance (needs 2-3 ADL failures, depending on the policy). To go on Medicaid (needs 3 ADL failures) plus proof of financial need.
- 4) **Eating:** This refers to the act of lifting a fork, spoon etc. to one’s own mouth and chewing or swallowing food. Even if a person can no longer cook (an IADL) they very often may be feeding themselves independently.
- 5) **Bathing:** This refers to showering or bathing alone without substantial assistance of another person (to steady them, aid them in washing, entering and exiting a shower or bath).
- 6) **Dressing:** This refers to putting on one’s clothes correctly and completely (e.g., bending to put pants on). Often buttons, zippers, etc. become a struggle, as well. When a loved one is putting on shorts in the dead of winter they are not adequately dressing themselves.
- 7) **Toileting and Continence:** This refers to getting oneself to a toilet, using the toilet and returning to another room safely and without substantial assistance. It also refers to the control (or lack thereof) of one’s bladder and bowels, including managing continence with adult diapers, etc.
- 8) **Transferring:** This is the act of walking a short distance (e.g., bed to bathroom) without substantial assistance.
- 9) **If your loved one is beginning to struggle** with his or her Activities of Daily Living, we strongly encourage you to come in for a consultation with one of our Elder Care Attorney / Elder Care Coordinator teams to determine the best way to help them. Don’t wait for a crisis. Know your options.

To learn more or make an appointment, please contact our office at [admin@irinashea.com](mailto:admin@irinashea.com) or 201-327-7000.