

Checklist:

Stroke Recovery

Here are 10 tips to help with the stroke recovery process and encourage better quality of life for your parent.

1. Keep key contacts handy

Include your parent's primary care doctor, specialists, physical therapist, occupational therapist and caregivers.

2. Stay on top of meds

Make sure your parent takes the correct doses of each medication at the prescribed times. Learn about the possible side effects of medications.

3. Avoid slips and falls

Remove potential tripping/slipping hazards. If your parent falls more than once, consult with a doctor or physical therapist. Should your parent experience a serious fall, get them to the closest emergency room.

4. Watch for warning signs

If your parent shows warning signs, such as balance problems, eyesight complaints, trouble swallowing or pain, inform their medical team right away.

5. Start physical/occupational therapy

Make sure your parent understands the plan and gets plenty of rest before and after sessions.

6. Communicate clearly with your parent

Ask simple questions, don't speak too loudly or softly, minimize distractions and, most of all, practice patience.

7. Lean on your support system

Gather a team to help keep your parent company and cover household tasks.

8. Follow up with your parent's doctor

Understand the recovery plan and discuss long-term effects.

9. Don't neglect self-care

Beware of caregiver burnout and take time for yourself, delegating any tasks that you can.

10. Consider professional help

If your parent isn't socially engaged, eating well or staying active, it might be time for in-home care or assisted living.