

Activities of Daily Living (ADL) and Independent Activities of Daily Living Assessment (IADL)

Before embarking on the journey of becoming a primary caregiver, it's essential to understand the specific needs of your loved one. Preserving their autonomy and sense of identity is paramount, not only for their well-being but also for yours. It's vital to recognize that if they're capable of managing certain aspects of their life independently, they should continue to do so. Engaging in an open dialogue with your loved one is the most effective approach to discern their needs. However, when direct communication is not possible or if they're unsure of their needs, unable to express them, or reluctant to discuss them, alternative strategies can help you assess their situation.

Activities of Daily Living (ADL) and **Independent Activities of Daily Living (IADL)** are concepts used in healthcare to assess an individual's ability to perform tasks necessary for independent living. ADLs refer to the basic self-care tasks that an individual performs on a daily basis, such as eating, bathing, dressing, and toileting. IADLs are tasks that require a higher level of cognitive and physical ability, such as managing finances, shopping for groceries or clothes, maintaining a residence, managing medications, and meal preparation. Assessing a person's ability to perform ADLs and IADLs helps healthcare professionals, caregivers, and families determine the level of assistance or care an individual requires and aids in planning for that care.

On the following pages, you will find **The Katz Index of Independence in Activities of Daily Living** and **The Lawton Instrumental Activities of Daily Living Scale**. These tools are invaluable in gauging the support your loved one requires. Always consult with healthcare professionals before making significant care decisions.

Reassessing the Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) and Independent Activities of Daily Living (IADLs) of a loved one is an ongoing process. Their needs and abilities can change over time due to aging, illness, or recovery from surgery. It's generally recommended to conduct a reassessment annually. More frequent evaluations may be necessary if there are significant changes in health status, after hospitalization, or if there is a noticeable decline in physical or cognitive abilities.

Regular communication with healthcare professionals can guide the frequency of ADL and IADL assessments. They can offer expert advice based on the specific conditions and needs of your loved one to promote their independence and quality of life.