



How to Choose Adult Day Services or Respite Care

Adult Day Services

This is a planned program of activities designed to promote well-being through social and health-related services. The center may be free-standing, part of a larger continuum of care or part of a specialized program. There are three main types of adult day centers:

- *Adult day social care* provides social activities, meals, recreation and some health-related services.
- *Adult day health services* provide social activities as well as intensive health, therapeutic and social services for those with severe medical problems.
- *Dementia-specific adult day care* provides social and health services only to those with diagnosed dementias.

Adult day care (ADC) centers usually operate during daytime hours, although some of the dementia-specific centers have night care, because patients often have sleep hours reversed.

Adult day care centers can be public or private, non-profit or for-profit. Their intent is to provide older adults an opportunity to get out of the house and receive both mental and social stimulation, and to give caregivers an opportunity to attend to personal needs, work or relax.

CareGuide@Home™ says, “Many caregivers feel reluctant to use ADC services because they seem unfamiliar, or because the loved one is hesitant to try something new. If this rings true for you, look at it this way — adult day care offers a dual benefit for elders and their families. Participants benefit from socializing with others, as well as receiving needed care services. Caregivers benefit by getting a break from caregiving duties during the day, while knowing that a loved one is in good hands.”

ADC center participants need to be mobile, with the possible assistance of a cane, walker or wheelchair, and in many cases, must also be continent. Check with your ADC center to verify requirements.

In addition to the many online resources to help locate adult day care centers in your area, you may also ask your family doctor, local senior center, call the local Area Agency on Aging and/or look in the Yellow Pages under Adult Day Care, Aging Services, Senior Citizens’ Services and other similar categories.

Important Questions to Ask

Here are questions you may want to ask before deciding on an adult day services program or center:

- Who owns or sponsors the center?
- How long has it been operating?
- Is it licensed, certified or nationally accredited?
- What are the days and hours of operation?
- Is transportation to and from the center provided?
- Which conditions are accepted (memory loss, limited mobility, etc.)?
- What are the staff credentials?
- What is the ratio of staff to participants?
- What activities are offered?
- Is there a variety of individual and group programs?
- Are meals or snacks provided?
- What is the cost? Is financial assistance available?

Medicare does not cover adult day care; however, in some states Medicaid will pay most or all of the costs in a licensed adult day health care or Alzheimer-focused center for participants with low income.

Respite Care

Adult day care is one form of respite care. Others are available at assisted living communities and continuing care retirement communities where your loved one can stay overnight, for a weekend, or a week or two while the caregiver is away. Respite care can also be done in the home with a trained volunteer or a professional caregiver who stays with your loved one and takes over your caregiving role for several hours or several days.

Additional Information

Additional information is available online from: www.helpguide.org, www.nadsa.org (National Adult Day Services Association), www.careguideathome.com and www.maturemarketinstitute.com (MetLife Mature Market Institute)

Resources: MetLife Mature Market Institute’s *Since You Care* Series; CareGuide@Home™; ARCH, National Respite Network & Resource Center; National Council on Aging; National Adult Day Services Association

