

ADL Assistance Guidelines*

ADL	Independent	Minimal	Moderate	Complete
Ambulation	Ambulates without assistance.	Uses walker or cane for ambulation and/or needs standby assistance.	Physical assistance of another person required. Can propel self in wheelchair.	Non-ambulatory. Cannot propel own wheelchair.
Continence/ Toileting	Goes to bathroom or uses bedside commode or urinal, cleans self and arranges clothes without assistance. Empties urinal or bedside commode. May use walker or wheelchair.	Receives assistance sometimes in going to bathroom, using bedside commode, urinal, or in cleaning self and arranging clothes after elimination.	Receives assistance at all times in going to bathroom, using bedside commode, urinal, or in cleaning self and arranging clothes after elimination. Incontinent of bowel and bladder occasionally.	Incontinent of bowel and bladder most or all of the time. Cannot go to bathroom, use urinal, or bedside commode at all.
Transfer	Moves in and out of bed and chair without assistance.	Needs assistance of device or some assistance such as helping scoot to edge of chair/bed, or steadying chair or walker.	Requires physical assistance of one person who does some of the lifting and balancing.	Doesn't get out of bed unless lifted by person or device.
Dressing	Gets clothes from closets and drawers. Gets dressed and undressed without assistance.	Gets clothes from closets and drawers. Gets dressed and undressed without assistance except for footwear and buttons.	Receives assistance in getting dressed, undressed or stays partly or completely underdressed.	Unable to assist in any way.
Eating	Feeds self without assistance. Preparation of food may be by other person.	Feeds self after food is cut up or bread buttered.	Receives some assistance in getting food to mouth and is untidy.	Totally fed or receives tube feedings or IV fluids for nutritional support.
Bathing either sponge bath, shower or tub.	Receives no assistance (gets in and out of shower or tub by self).	Receives assistance in bathing only one part of the body (such as feet or back). Bath / shower or sponge water is prepared by another.	Receives assistance in bathing more than one body part. Bath / shower or sponge water is prepared by another.	Unable to assist in any way.

*These are guidelines to provide a common descriptive language and will need to be modified for your documentation system/EHR. They are based on language using "Independent, Minimum, Moderate and Complete". They are adapted from *Katz Index of Independence in Activities of Daily Living (ADL)* and *Lawton and Brody Physical Self Maintenance Scale*".