



For the Lifespan: The Caregiver Guide

Module 11

Assistive Devices: Tools to Help You



Objectives

After completing this module, participants will be able to:

- Identify different types of AT devices.
- Describe how AT can help care recipients with tasks of daily living to encourage their independence.
- Determine what types of AT will be most useful.
- Describe where and how to find AT devices.
- Identify how to obtain financial support for AT.

Assistive Technology (AT) Device

An AT device is any item or piece of equipment that is used to **increase, maintain, or improve** the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. AT is used to improve quality of life and increase independence.



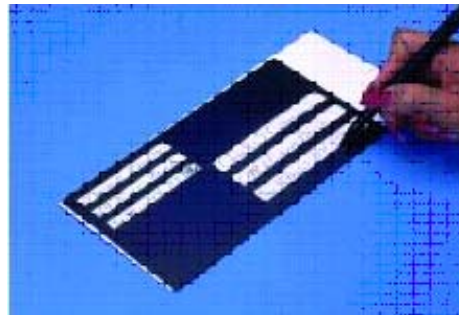
What Are the Different Types of AT?

- Low-Technology
- High-Technology
- Aids for Daily Living



Low-Technology Devices include:

- Specially designed jar opener
- Dressing stick with a hook
- Plastic guide for writing checks



High-Technology Devices include:

- Power scooters
- Computers
- Remote controls
- Personal emergency response systems



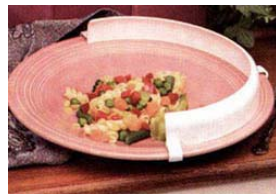
Independence with AT

AT can help your care recipient with tasks of daily living to encourage their independence.



Examples of AT for Eating and Drinking include:

- Super grip bendable weighted utensils
- Eating utensils with large plastic handles
- Scooper bowls or food guards
- Two handled mugs
- Flow lids
- Weighted cups
- Cutout cups



Examples of AT for Toileting and Bathing include:

- Toilet frames
- Toilet seat with armrests
- Long-handled bath sponges
- Hand held showerheads
- Push button soap dispensers



Examples of AT for Dressing include:

- Sock and shoe aids
- Dressing stick
- Velcro® closures



Examples of High-Technology AT Devices include:

- Medication reminders and pill dispensers
- Personal emergency response systems (PERS)
- Electronic devices: iPad, iPhone, and enhanced phones



Review and Add to Your List:

“Help Needed for Activities of Daily Living.”



Sources of Information About Obtaining AT Devices

- Talk to others with similar concerns
- Visit AT demonstration centers
- Search the internet (abledata.com, pattersonmedical.com, google.com)



AT Retail Vendors

- Medical supply vendors/catalogs
- Local hardware or variety stores
- “Big box” stores (such as Wal-Mart or Walgreens)
- Electronic stores (such as Radio Shack)
- Home improvement stores (Lowe's or Home Depot)
- Online stores (pattersonmedical.com, amazon.com)



Getting Professional Help in Choosing AT

- AT Specialist
- Occupational Therapist
- Rehabilitation Engineer
- Physician
- Hospital Education Center Staff
- Center for Independent Living
- Area Agency on Aging
- Utah Center for Assistive Technology



AT Services

- Finding the right device
- Learning how to use the device
- Making adjustments
- Doing repairs and maintenance



Financial Support for Buying AT

- Service Agencies
- Centers for Independent Living
- Utah Assistive Technology Foundation/Zion's Bank (loans and small grants)
- Utah Center for Assistive Technology



Assistive Technology (AT)

- Useful tools and resources to help your care recipient be more independent in daily living activities.



Take a Break!



- Embrace your anger
 - Do not ignore or deny. Anger is an honest emotion.
 - What counts is how you respond.
 - Use it to confront and work through problems.
 - Pay attention to when you become angry.
 - There are consequences if you react in anger.
 - Don't react until you have calmed down.
 - Stop – Think – Act.
 - Write down your MAD/ANGRY feelings. When you're done, rip up the page and throw it away, and tell the anger good-bye!

Things to Remember

- Remember to take good care of yourself by staying positive, exercising regularly, getting enough rest, eating nutritiously, using good body mechanics, keeping a sense of humor, relaxing and doing some things you enjoy when you can.
- Always believe in yourself and your abilities.
- Remember that you have the strength, courage, compassion, and wisdom, to succeed.
- Thanks for your participation.

