


# 10 Cost-Cutting Warning Signs

Following, from Home Instead Senior Care® and the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, are ways that a downturn in the economy could impact seniors. If you're a family caregiver, ask yourself the following questions. If you're an older adult experiencing difficulties because of the economy, contact your local Area Agency on Aging or Home Instead Senior Care office. Or, if you have a financial issue, contact the Garrett Planning Network.

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1. Is your senior's home too warm in the summer and too cold in the winter?
  2. Is the lawn not getting mowed nor is the sidewalk getting cleaned in inclement weather?
  3. Is your loved one complaining about not being able to afford medications?
  4. Are home repairs not getting made?
  5. Is there a shortage of food in the house?
  6. Is your senior skipping doctor's appointments?
  7. Is your older adult staying home more and becoming isolated?
  8. Is your senior cutting out entertainment?
  9. Does your loved one eat out less?
  10. Did your senior cancel a vacation?

For more information about the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, log on to [www.n4a.org](http://www.n4a.org) or contact the organization's CEO Sandy Markwood at [smarkwood@n4a.org](mailto:smarkwood@n4a.org). For more information about the Garrett Planning Network, visit [www.garrettplanningnetwork.com](http://www.garrettplanningnetwork.com) or contact Sheryl Garrett at [Sheryl@garrettplanning.com](mailto:Sheryl@garrettplanning.com). For more about Home Instead Senior Care, visit [www.homeinstead.com](http://www.homeinstead.com).

# 10 Ways Seniors Can Stretch Their Dollars

Following, from Home Instead Senior Care® and various senior and financial experts, are 10 ways that seniors can stretch their dollars:

- 1. Seek the services of an objective financial planner.** Sheryl Garrett, CFP®, founder of the Garrett Planning Network, said it's important for seniors to seek the advice of an objective fiduciary. The Garrett Planning Network ([www.garrettplanningnetwork.com](http://www.garrettplanningnetwork.com)) features experts throughout the country who offer their advice on a fee-only basis.
- 2. Get a second opinion on investments and financial purchases.** If you're approached about changing your investments or making a purchase, make sure you get another opinion.
- 3. Contact your local Area Agency on Aging if you're having trouble paying for food and gas.** For more information or an office near you, log on to National Association of Area Agencies on Aging at [www.n4a.org](http://www.n4a.org).
- 4. Get back to gardening.** The economic downturn is generating a resurgence in gardening, and the over 55 crowd traditionally has been among the most avid gardeners. The national seed and plant company Burpee has experienced unprecedented 40 percent growth this year, double its normal rate, according to CEO George Ball. With food costs up as much as 25 percent in places, gardening provides a 1 to 10 savings ratio, according to Ball. "In other words, for every \$100 you spend on garden plants, you'll get \$1,000 in produce. While \$100 in groceries may last for only a couple of weeks, a senior can eat for six months on the produce from \$100 in plants," Ball said.
- 5. Avoid convenience foods, which are more expensive.** Watch for sales on fresh or canned fruits, vegetables and meats, which will be less expensive than convenience foods and better for you.
- 6. Look for deals on generic medications.** Contact your pharmacist about ways to save money on your medications.
- 7. Walk when you can.** If the gas prices are cutting into your social life, organize a walking club or walk with friends.
- 8. Carpool when you can't walk.** There's economy in numbers. If you can't afford to drive somewhere solo or in pairs, contact others you know going in the same direction or the same place and share costs.
- 9. Keep drapes drawn during the heat of the day, and minimize opening and closing doors in the cold of the winter.** Close off parts of the house you're not using to cut down on utility costs.
- 10. Financial planner Sheryl Garrett says that the ability of seniors to live at home helps cut costs as well.** If you or a loved one needs assistance around the house, contact Home Instead Senior Care or visit the company's Web site at [www.homeinstead.com](http://www.homeinstead.com).