

Understanding the Different Types of Senior Living

What Older Adults and
Families Should Know



INDEPENDENT LIVING COMMUNITIES



PERSONAL CARE/ASSISTED LIVING COMMUNITIES



MEMORY CARE COMMUNITIES

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Introduction

If you are beginning the search for senior living, the wide range of options can be confusing. While having so many choices makes it easier to find a solution that best meets your personal needs, it can also leave people feeling perplexed at first. In fact, older adults and families sometimes say they feel so overwhelmed they delay moving forward. Unfortunately, that can leave you searching for a community in the midst of a crisis.

Inside this Guide

This guide will help demystify the process and provide you with a basic understanding of independent living, personal care/assisted living, and memory care. We'll cover topics ranging from features and benefits to who should consider each type of senior living community.



INDEPENDENT LIVING COMMUNITIES





Definition and Purpose

People often choose this type of senior living when they are looking to free themselves from the burdens of home ownership so they have more time and money to enjoy retirement.

- **Designed for active older adults:** [Independent living](#) is an attractive option for seniors who value autonomy and wish to maintain their privacy, but are tired of the burdens associated with a private home. Residents of these communities usually have their own apartment, suite, cottage or villa.
- **Maintenance-free lifestyle:** Because team members at the community handle all of the details of maintaining your apartment or villa, such as snow removal, appliance repair, and lawn care, you'll be free to spend your days as you wish. No being tied down because of household obligations.



Typical Features

- **Private apartments or cottages:** Because independence is key, residents of these communities often have several types of housing options to consider. The most common are apartments and cottages/villas.
- **Dining services:** This might vary from community to community. Most offer at least one meal or the option of adding a meal plan on to monthly rental services.
- **Social activities and clubs:** Independent living communities are known for promoting socialization by offering a wide range of activities. They can include art workshops, game nights, wellness programs, and volunteer opportunities.
- **Transportation and housekeeping:** These will vary by community, but are typically available in some form.





Benefits

- **Increased social engagement:** Older adults often find the friendships and socialization to be the best part of community life.
- **More free time:** As we grow older, maintaining a home not only becomes more of a burden, but it can also be a safety hazard. In an independent living community, these tasks are handled by team members.
- **Enhanced safety and security:** From a thoughtfully designed environment to team members and friends nearby 24/7, peace of mind is another benefit of community life. That applies to both seniors and those who love them.
- **Social activities and clubs:** Independent living communities are known for promoting socialization by offering a wide range of activities. They can include art workshops, game nights, wellness programs, and volunteer opportunities.
- **Transportation and housekeeping:** These will vary by community, but are typically available in some form.



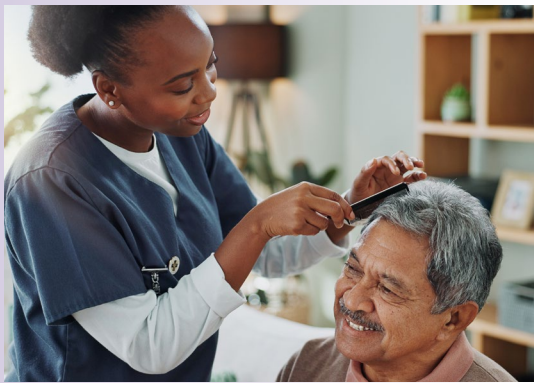
Who Is It Best For?

- **Seniors who are mostly independent:** While these communities often have a variety of amenities and services available, the majority of residents are independent. They make this moving seeking the support that makes this lifestyle easier.



PERSONAL CARE/ASSISTED LIVING COMMUNITIES





Definition and Purpose

[Personal care/assisted living](#) is often described as the best of both worlds. Residents usually have their own apartment or suite giving them the privacy most seniors desire. They do so with the knowledge that caregivers are always nearby.

- **Support with activities of daily living (ADLs):** Most residents in a personal care/assisted living community need a helping hand with at least a few of these tasks. They range from bathing and dressing to meal preparation or using the bathroom.



Services Provided

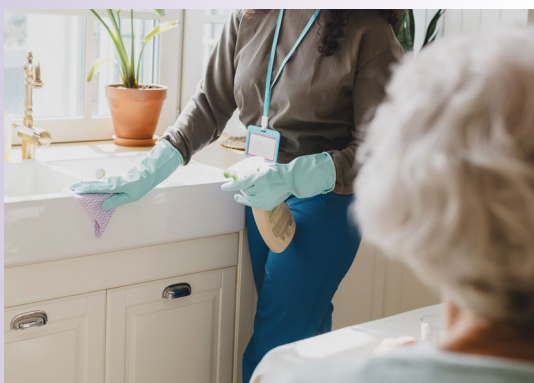
- **Medication management:** Helping older adults stay on track with medications is an essential service. Team members oversee dosages, times, and refills.
- **Dining services:** Well-balanced meals and snacks are typically offered in a variety of settings. It allows residents to choose their own meals and dining times.
- **Housekeeping assistance:** Housekeeping and laundry can be a challenge for older adults, especially those with mobility struggles, making these services essential.
- **24-hour team member availability:** Having caregivers and other team members is another service that ensures both safety and support.





Benefits

- **Improved nutrition:** Grocery shopping and cooking for one or two can feel like too much work. Seniors who move to personal care/assisted living often find their health improves as their diet does.
- **Personalized care plans:** Care teams work together to create individual plans for each resident. It helps to ensure each person lives their best quality of life.
- **Opportunities for socialization:** When older adults limit or give up driving, they may become isolated and lonely. In a personal care/assisted living community, there are both formal and informal activities that take place every day.
- **Peace of mind for families:** For adult children who've been trying to keep an aging parent safe in their own home, this move can bring great peace of mind.



Who Is It Best For?

- **Seniors needing moderate daily assistance:** This level of care is a good fit for people who aren't able to live independently but don't have complex clinical needs.



MEMORY CARE COMMUNITIES





Definition and Purpose

- **Specialized support for adults with dementia:** Because of the changes that dementia causes to the brain, specialty care is often a necessity. [Memory care programs](#) fill that need.

Specialized Services

- **Structured routines:** Dementia makes it difficult for people to rely on memory. But having meaningful daily routines removes that stress.
- **Secure environments:** Wandering away and becoming lost is a common and dangerous behavior for people with memory loss. A memory care community is secured to reduce the chances of that happening.
- **Specialized dining:** Meals can create unique challenges for adults with dementia. A thoughtfully designed dining room and menus that can accommodate a loss of dexterity are just a couple of ways nutrition can be improved in memory care.
- **Team members trained in dementia care:** Developing the skills needed to support people with dementia is a must. Communities provide this type of training.





Benefits

- **Emotional support:** Navigating any form of dementia can be isolating and stressful for the senior and their loved ones. Personal care/assisted living communities can offer support to the entire family at every stage of the disease.
- **Better quality of life:** When a family member is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or another form of dementia, the entire family feels the impact. With the support of a memory care community, the resident and their family can live the best quality of life possible.



Who Should Consider Memory Care?

- **Individuals with memory-related conditions:** While Alzheimer's is the most common diagnosis for residents in a memory care community, other types of dementia can usually be accommodated, too.



Conclusion

Understanding the different types of senior living can help families make informed decisions that support both independence and quality of life. From independent living communities to personal care/assisted living and memory care, each option is designed to meet changing needs while providing comfort, safety, and social connection.

[View Our Community List](#)



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