

Residence Options Fit Health Needs Of Seniors

The topic of senior housing is a confusing one at best. Today, there are many residence options available for seniors who are living longer, more independent lives.

The trouble can be deciding upon the type of housing that's right for you and your family, and overcoming the "nursing home"

stigma.

While the home in which you've raised your family may be close to your heart, by retirement age, many seniors begin to feel that their current residence is either too large or too much of a burden to continue to maintain.

As such, the search is on for a

place to spend their "golden years." There are several options available to you depending upon your level of independence and health.

Here's a brief rundown on the choices to consider:

- **Active lifestyle** - Active adult communities, also referred to as resort communities, attract both retired persons and those nearing retirement age who wish to get a start on owning a place where they will eventually retire.

Many are gated communities and offer amenities typical of a resort, such as a pool, golf club, exercise rooms and more.

- **Independent/congregate living** - If you're an active senior in good health, then an independent living also known as congregate living community or residence may be the ideal situation.

These homes range from age-restricted housing communities where you own your own condominium or patio home to residences that are more like hotels, complete with housekeeping services, meals, and activities.

In most cases, buses are available to transport you to area shopping and other planned retreats.

Some communities have their own bank, supermarket, hair salon and houses of worship on the grounds so that residents can have easy access.

In addition, depending upon the setup of the residence, there may be living quarters and then a centralized dining area where meals are served or company is hosted.

- **Assisted living** - For those who are still relatively independent but may require a visiting nurse or need minimal assistance, like bathing or dressing, assisted living facilities can provide the care you need.

Health-care services are provided on the grounds or may be from a neighboring hospital or medical center.

- **Nursing homes** - Seniors who require round-the-clock medical care may seek out nursing home situations. This is pretty much the only option for those who have deteriorating mental or physical

capabilities or great difficulty with daily activities.

- **Continuing care** - These facilities marry independent, assisted and nursing care living.

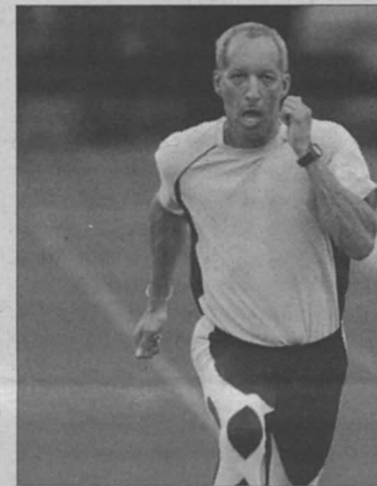
They are often large communities over acres of land that offer different sectors of care, dependent upon qualifying factors.

As you age or become unable to care for yourself, you simply move from independent living to assisted living to nursing scenarios. Most even have specialized care for Alzheimer's sufferers.

This presents the best option for seniors who want the security of knowing they'll be cared for as they move through the years without having to relocate to different facilities.

Private care facilities have several benefits, but also come with pricey monthly fees. Depending upon the level of care, facilities may charge upwards of several thousands of dollars per month.

It is wise to consult with a financial planner or accountant to see how much, if any, of these costs can be covered by Medicare, Medicaid or other government assistance. In addition, some facilities may have waiting lists, so be sure to call ahead and inquire about the application process and wait time for entering one of these residences.



Is Your Child Really Too Sick For School?

Each day, kids put their parents' sleuthing skills to the test when they say they're too sick to go to school. After assessing the symptoms, checking the temperature of foreheads and pulling out the thermometer, Mom or Dad makes the determination if an absence is warranted.

After all, a day home for a youngster often means a day off of work for a parent as well to provide supervision at home. This can lead to lost wages and confrontation with the boss — particularly if absences are frequent.

According to the Atlanta Center for Disease Control Handbook for Day Care Centers, there are certain symptoms parents should look for before sending their children to school, which usually indicate real illness:

- Temperature above 101 F in the morning.
- Diarrhea, where more than one abnormally loose stool has occurred in the last 24 hours.
- Vomiting anytime after 6 p.m. the preceding evening.
- Severe coughing where the

child gets red or blue in the face or the child makes a high-pitched croupy or whooping sound after he or she coughs.

- Difficult or rapid breathing.
 - Yellowish skin or eyes.
 - Pinkeye (conjunctivitis), evidenced by tears, redness of eyelid lining and irritation, followed by swelling and discharge of pus.
 - Infected skin patches that are crusty, bright yellow, dry or gummy.
 - Any contagious disease, like chicken pox, measles, mumps, mono, etc.
 - If an antibiotic has been given for an ear infection or sore throat, wait 24 hours before sending a child back to school.
 - Severe itching of the body or scalp, which could indicate the presence of lice.
 - Severe sore throat or trouble swallowing.
 - Constant running nose.
- When validated, keeping children home from school when sick prevents the spreading of disease, so that all kids in the class will be healthier and miss fewer school days.



People 65 and older who fall

are 4-5 times more likely to be admitted to a long-term care facility.

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