



Senior Living Guide

A COMPREHENSIVE LOOK AT THE OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO TODAY'S MATURE ADULTS.





FINDING THE RIGHT SENIOR LIVING SOLUTION MAY SEEM LIKE A DAUNTING TASK.

BUT WITH OUR HELP, IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE.

In this guide, we'll explore the different types of senior living communities, the levels of care they provide, as well as other key considerations you'll need to understand when evaluating and ultimately choosing the right senior living community. This is true whether you're planning for your future or searching on behalf of someone you love.

In this guide:

1. What Is Senior Living?
2. The Different Types Of Senior Living.
3. What Does Senior Living Cost?
4. Senior Living Versus Aging At Home.
5. Is It Time To Consider Senior Living?
6. The Varenita® Advantage.

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WHAT IS SENIOR LIVING?

SENIOR LIVING ISN'T ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL.



“Senior living community” is a general term commonly applied to different types of care and housing specifically created for seniors 55+ years of age and older and designed to suit various lifestyles and levels of medical care. These communities include retirement (also known as 55+ communities), independent living, assisted living, and memory care. To find the perfect senior living community for you or your loved one, you must understand the differences and which type best suits your individual needs and preferences.



LIVE...

independently, surrounded
by friendly neighbors,
compassionate care, and
first-class amenities.

The changing face of senior living.

Over the past few decades, senior living communities have undergone a metamorphosis. These new communities are no longer the “stereotypical” nursing homes but rather vibrant living environments that offer distinct advantages over their predecessors.

Today’s senior living communities are:

Offering Independence & Choice

Today’s communities focus on preserving your or your loved one’s sense of independence. Residents are given options and the ability to choose what is important to them: the activities they want to attend when they dine, the entrées they want to eat, and so much more.

So Much More Than Just Bingo

Senior living communities now feature engaging daily activities and stimulating events for residents. They range from fitness-related activities such as yoga and tai chi to day trips to in-community guest lectures and concerts.

Enriching Lives With Innovative Technology

Technology is one of the most impactful additions to senior living today. Communities are using technologies that promote personalized and engaging experiences, contribute to residential health and well-being, and ensure resident safety and protection.

Promoting Socialization to Enhance Health & Happiness

Research has shown that isolation and the lack of regular socialization is a significant factor in seniors’ emotional, physical, and cognitive health. This can be a particular concern for older adults who live at home and have little contact with friends and family. Senior living communities provide an environment where residents are encouraged to stay healthy and active and have neighbors and staff members just a few steps away.

Built Around the Idea of Connection

Connection has an extremely positive impact on the lives of residents and their families. Residents are encouraged to connect with their family, neighbors, peers, and staff members through group activities, volunteer activities, planned trips, and social media.



IN OLDER ADULTS...
social connection & engagement
are associated with better health,
a stronger immune system, and a
lower risk of dementia.*

- PSYCHOLOGY TODAY

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THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF SENIOR LIVING.

WHAT SOLUTION BEST FITS YOUR NEEDS?

When it's time to consider changing the living situation for you or a loved one, choosing from the available senior housing options can be pretty confusing. The choices range from aging at home to full-time care in a senior living community or nursing home. In this section, we will explain your options, who benefits from them, and how they work. In the following section, we will explain the relative costs.



Independent Living

Independent living gives residents the freedom to pursue their retirement goals in a tight-knit community designed specifically for older adults. Individuals can stay active, connect with peers, and leverage on-site amenities such as a fitness center, art studio, and more to elevate their overall well-being. These communities don't offer care programs, but they typically offer meal plans, on-site restaurants, housekeeping, transportation, and more.

Assisted Living

Assisted living is well-suited for relatively independent seniors who need some assistance with their daily living activities but do not need regular medical care. Residents in assisted living communities can receive help with their daily tasks, such as eating, dressing, and bathing, as well as around-the-clock access to staff for emergency assistance. Assistance is tailored to meet the needs of each resident. So, they only receive the care they need, enabling them to retain as much independence as possible while still having help available whenever it's needed.



Memory Care

Memory care is a more advanced level of care for older adults with memory loss. At a 24/7-monitored memory care community, residents receive support with daily tasks from specially trained staff, as well as memory-enhancing activities so they can thrive in mind, body, and spirit. Even if you or your loved one do not yet require memory care today, you may want to consider a community that provides this type of care in case it becomes necessary in the future.





This innovative new program is perfect for seniors who are experiencing mild cognitive impairment or early memory loss.

AssistedPlus+ ONLY AT VARENITA

Our industry-leading AssistedPlus+ program is built around an inclusive “open campus” model. It is specifically designed for residents experiencing the early symptoms of memory loss or Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) but may not require the full attention or secure environment of a traditional memory program. Residents who are appropriate for transitional care continue to reside in the Assisted Living area of the community while receiving additional support with daily activities. This program is currently available at select Varenita communities.

ADDITIONAL SENIOR LIVING OPTIONS

In addition to these three common types of senior living, there are other options available such as:

Continuing Care Retirement Community - CCRCs

In a Continuing Care Retirement Community, residents don't have to move anywhere when their need for care increases. These communities can accommodate residents with a wide range of needs, including those who live independently and those who need full-time care. CCRCs often market to seniors with higher incomes, although some are certainly more economical. But the majority of CCRCs require an large lump sum entry fee, in addition to a monthly service fee.

Nursing Homes

Nursing homes have more of a clinical environment where residents typically live in private or semi-private rooms that do not include a living room or kitchen. Nursing home residents typically have more complex healthcare conditions that require the assistance of a skilled nurse or a physical or speech therapist. Some require respiratory care services.

In-Home Care

The term “in-home care” includes a wide variety of non-medical services that allow you or a senior loved one to continue living safely and comfortably in the privacy of their own home. These “unskilled” services are provided by family members, home health aides or certified nursing assistants, and they allow elderly people to continue to function on a daily basis. If you or your loved one requires more than four to five hours of home care a day, assisted living may be the better choice financially.

Adult Day Care

Adult day services programs offer an alternative to nursing home care for those who do not need 24-hour skilled nursing. Adult day services often assist working caregivers to balance the needs of work and caregiving responsibilities as well as respite for full-time family caregivers. These programs are designed to help people stay mentally and physically active, while reducing their isolation, improving their health, and preventing decline of their abilities.

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WHAT DOES SENIOR LIVING COST?

THE FINANCIAL IMPACT & HOW BEST TO PAY FOR IT.



As you research senior living costs, it becomes apparent that comparing prices isn't as easy as it may seem. Costs can vary greatly based on the type of senior living you are considering, the level of care needed, and even from community to community. In this section, you'll find insights on the different senior living costs, what goes into those costs, and ways to help pay for senior living.

EACH SENIOR LIVING OPTION IS DIFFERENT



In-Home Care

In-home care may appear to be less expensive, but since this type of care is typically charged hourly, the cost can increase dramatically as the amount of care needed increases. The cost of continuous in-home care is quite high, particularly when compared to assisted living. For example, 70 hours per week of in-home care costs an average of \$7,129 per month.



Independent Living

"Independent living," commonly referred to as retirement communities, is the least expensive type of senior care because retirement communities offer no personal care assistance and health or medical services. The cost to live in these communities varies dramatically depending on where you live and the specific community you choose. Communities that offer expanded amenities and meals in their monthly fee are much more expensive than basic senior apartments. Typically, independent living can cost 30-50% less per month than assisted living.



Assisted Living & Memory Care

In 2023, the average cost of assisted living nationally is \$4,950 per month or \$59,400 annually. The average cost of memory care nationally is \$1,200 more per month, or \$6,150. Both assisted living and memory care costs can vary widely based on the community's location, amenities, care offerings, and the level of service it provides. Luxury communities with resort-style amenities can cost significantly more than those that offer more basic amenities. This is true even if the communities are located in the same area. It's important to tour and understand the pricing structure of each community you are considering. Many assisted living and memory care communities charge an all-inclusive monthly fee. Others charge a monthly fee that covers rent, meals, and activities, as well as additional fees for care services based on the "level of care" a resident needs. The higher the level of assistance, the higher the cost.

What Are Community Fees?

Residents pay this non-refundable, one-time fee at move-in. Independent living, assisted living, and memory care communities use these fees to cover the costs of their extensive pre-move-in evaluation process, which includes a thorough, in-person "needs assessment" of each potential resident's physical and cognitive health. As part of this process, staff members make in-home visits, coordinate with doctors, pharmacists, and other medical professionals, and complete all the paperwork required by each state. Community fees are often confused with entrance fees at a continuing care retirement community. CCRC entrance fees are much larger. They commonly range from \$30K to \$1MM+.

What Are All-Inclusive Monthly Fees?

An "all-inclusive" monthly fee means you will receive one bill for rent, utilities, meals, and services. This bill includes housekeeping, laundry, personal care, recreational activities, transportation, and more. The amount is determined at move-in based on the resident's choice of apartment and their "needs assessment." If, over time, a resident requires greater "levels of care," this fee can increase. It is critical to understand what's included and what is not since the definition of "all-inclusive" can vary widely from community to community.

Understanding "levels of care" fees.

Assisted living and memory care communities offer different levels of care customized to meet the needs of each resident. The levels of care correspond with individual needs assessments, which are done for each resident at move-in. This comprehensive assessment evaluates and ranks elements such as the ability to communicate and perform Activities of Daily Living (ADLs), pre-existing illnesses, cognitive ability, food requirements, need for assistive technologies, and medication management. This process is what determines the level of care each resident will need. Levels of care vary depending on each community and how they define them.

Typically, communities may have four levels of care, while others could have as many as six or seven. In communities that offer both assisted living and memory care, these assessments are also used to confirm the appropriate living arrangement for each resident. Ask about their pricing structure and, specifically, the levels of care they offer. With each new level of care, the fees can rise by several hundred dollars per month. So make sure to ask thorough questions about the levels of care, needs assessments, pricing, and payment plans with each community you are considering.



WAYS TO PAY FOR SENIOR LIVING EXPENSES

Medicaid & Medicare PACE

Medicaid generally covers nursing homes for people with low income and assets. But some states have waiver programs that provide some Medicaid coverage for assisted living to eligible applicants. However, these rules vary by state. Some have enrollment caps and long waiting lists to qualify for assisted living coverage. For more information, visit the Medicaid website to find your state Medicaid agency: <https://www.medicaid.gov/about-us/beneficiary-resources/index.html#statemenu>

Medicare PACE does not provide funds to pay for senior care. It is an optional program that can cover all of a participating senior's medical related needs as well as some personal care expenses. This program is open to both Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries. Medicare PACE provides comprehensive medical and social services for in-home, adult day health centers, and inpatient facilities as an alternative for those who would otherwise need nursing home care. These programs do not pay for traditional assisted living. However seniors living in assisted living communities can still receive care services paid for by PACE. For more information, visit the Medicare.gov website: <https://www.medicare.gov/health-drug-plans/health-plans/your-coverage-options/other-medicare-health-plans/PACE>

Long-Term Care Insurance or Life Insurance

Long-term care insurance is one way that seniors can pay for assisted living. Unlike private health insurance or Medicare, long-term care insurance plans can include coverage for services older adults may need when they can no longer live alone. However, long-term care insurance isn't right for everyone. Things such as the cost and your age are important factors when considering purchasing a long-term care policy. Waiting until care is needed to buy coverage isn't an option. Seniors won't qualify for long-term care insurance if they have a debilitating pre-existing condition, and insurance carriers won't approve most applicants over age 75.

If you don't have long-term care insurance, but you or your loved one has a current life insurance policy, you can use it to help pay for long-term care. There are a number of ways to use your policy, which include:

- Selling the policy and creating a long-term care benefit plan
- Surrendering the life insurance policy for its cash value
- Take a loan from the policy's cash accumulation
- Use the cash value to fund a new policy for life insurance with long-term care

For more information, consult a trained insurance professional.

Home Equity Options

Some seniors choose to sell their home to pay for part or all of their senior living expenses, but for those who would prefer not to sell their home, reverse mortgages are an option for older adults who own their homes outright or have a small existing mortgages. They can convert some of the equity in their home into cash payments while still retaining ownership. There are different types of reverse mortgages. The most common are federally insured Home Equity Conversion Mortgages (HECMs). For more information, visit the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) website:

https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/housing/sfh/hecm/hecmhome

Senior & Caregiver Tax Credits

Independent living expenses are not generally tax deductible unless you live in a continuing care retirement community (CCRC). Monthly fees for traditional independent living communities fees are not typically tax deductible. If you or your loved one receives medical services from a visiting home care nurse or caregiver, you may be able to write off these expenses. These services typically include chronic disease management, wound care, or medication management. If you or your loved one reside in an assisted living community, you may be able to deduct some service expenses or fees. However, not all assisted living costs can be deducted. To qualify for these deductions, you must meet specific IRS requirements, so make sure you consult a trained tax professional. For more information visit, IRS website: <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/child-and-dependent-care-credit-faqs>

Applying for VA Benefits

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers pension funds to some eligible wartime veterans and their surviving spouses who have a low income and limited assets under the "Aid and Attendance benefit," which provides a higher monthly pension amount. Eligible veterans and surviving spouses who require the assistance of another person to perform activities of daily living can be eligible for this benefit. For more information, visit U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs website:

<https://www.va.gov/pension/aid-attendance-housebound/>

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SENIOR LIVING VERSUS AGING AT HOME.

STAYING AT HOME IS OFTEN NOT THE BEST OPTION.

Approximately 88% of older adults would prefer to age at home, and many families believe this is a more cost-effective option than moving their loved one into an assisted living or memory care community. But is the cost of long-term in-home care really less expensive than assisted living or memory care, and more importantly, is it the right solution? Before answering this question, you should understand all the factors you need to consider when deciding whether to care for a loved one at home or move them into a senior living community.

Is assisted living more expensive than in-home care?

The general rule of thumb is that if an older adult requires up to 40 hours per week of paid home care, then home care is a less expensive solution than moving into an assisted living community. If they require more, then assisted living is a less expensive solution. However, many factors can change this equation, such as the state they live in, whether they rent or own their home, or if they need a high level of care for Alzheimer's disease or other related dementias once they have moved into assisted living. In addition to caregiver costs, which now average \$27 per hour nationally,** there are other significant monthly expenses directly associated with providing in-home care that many families don't consider. Here are the major cost factors:

MONTHLY IN-HOME CARE COSTS

- ***** - Rent or mortgage, property taxes, & insurance
- *** - Utilities, cable TV, water, & trash removal
- ***** - Daily caregiver visits
- *** - Home & yard maintenance
- ** - Housekeeping and laundry
- ** - Household & personal care supplies
- *** - Groceries & meal preparation
- *** - Transportation expenses including gas, insurance & car payment

According to A Place for Mom
**ASSISTED LIVING
COSTS
12.6%
LESS THAN**
an in-home health aide.*



It's much more than a financial decision.

The cost of in-home care is surprisingly expensive and unaffordable for the vast majority of families. In addition, many families don't really have the time or the available resources to make in-home care a viable and fulfilling solution. Providing in-home care (such as bathing, medication management, grooming, cooking, housekeeping, etc.), as well as scheduling and overseeing hired caregivers, can easily become overwhelming even for the most caring family. Since in-home care only provides "non-medical care services", it is important to consider what to do when a person's care needs become more than a family can safely handle at home.



UNLIKE ASSISTED LIVING...

in-home care only provides non-medical care and does not offer the same access to daily activities, dining, and amenities.



IS IT TIME TO CONSIDER SENIOR LIVING?

DON'T WAIT FOR A HEALTH CRISIS TO GET STARTED.



If you are trying to decide whether or not it's time to transition your parent or senior loved one to an assisted living community, it can be a very uncomfortable and stressful decision, especially if they or other family members are resistant to the idea. To help make it easier, we've outlined some of the key factors you should consider and the warning signs you should be looking for. If your parent or a senior loved one is experiencing any of the signs discussed below, it may be time to consider starting the conversation.

The key signs that it may be time to move to an assisted living or memory care community.

Poor Health That Continues to Decline

A chronic health condition that continues to deteriorate is a major warning sign. Regrettably, 80% of older adults suffer from at least one chronic disease and 77% have two or more conditions.* Rather than trying to manage your loved one's declining health at home, it may be time to transition to an assisted living community.

Increasing Safety Concerns

If your loved one is falling more often or having trouble navigating the stairs, they may no longer be safe on their own. Falling is a significant concern, particularly in older adults. On average, a senior adult receives emergency room treatment for a fall-related injury every 11 seconds.** Furthermore, seniors with memory impairment are at greater risk of falling. Older adults with dementia fall 2-3 times more than cognitively healthy older adults, and 60-80% of people with dementia fall annually.***

According to the
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

70%

OF AMERICANS

will need some
form of long-term care in
their lifetime.

Changes in Personal Hygiene

If you are noticing changes in your parent or loved one's personal hygiene, such as unclean clothing, body odor, oral health, dirty nails, or skin, this is a cause for concern. These changes can also be sign of self-neglect or depression. These warning signs should not be ignored. Self-neglect is a risk factor for early mortality among the elderly. Seniors who suffer from self-neglect are twice as likely to die as seniors who do not.

Additional warning signs of self-neglect include:

- Refusal to take medications
- Signs of weight loss, malnutrition, or dehydration
- Unsanitary living conditions
- Unopened mail or difficulty paying or managing bills

Difficulty Managing Daily Tasks

Nearly 18 million older adults have reported needing help with daily activities such as cooking, cleaning, and other common daily activities. So, if mental or physical limitations are preventing your parent or loved one from taking care of themselves properly, it might be time to consider moving them to assisted living or memory care.

Warning signs to watch for include:

- Forget to take their medication or no longer manage medications
- Are losing weight
- Have pets who appear to be neglected and malnourished
- Can no longer drive or fail to keep their appointments

Loneliness or Isolation

Unfortunately, for many seniors, their world can become smaller as they age. Loneliness and feelings of isolation are common among seniors, and it can result in a heightened risk of depression, anxiety, and even dementia. Staying socially active and engaging in activities is critical to aging well and staying healthy as people age. Assisted living and memory care communities commonly offer a mix of activities, classes, and events that foster engagement, stimulate the mind, and provide a rewarding sense of purpose.

Memory Issues

If your parent or loved one's memory is not what it used to be or they are frequently confused or experiencing clear signs of memory loss, you may want to consider assisted living or memory care. Memory issues are not uncommon in older adults. In fact, approximately ten percent of people over the age of 65 have dementia, and it's estimated that one in three people 85 or older have some form of cognitive decline. If your parent or loved one has previously been diagnosed with dementia, you should definitely move sooner than later. The sooner someone suffering from Alzheimer's disease or related dementias moves to assisted living or memory care, the easier it will be for them build relationships, get to know their neighbors and transition into the community.

Many seniors want to stay at home and fear moving to assisted living because they think it means losing their independence and connection to their community.

Talking to your parents about assisted living can be challenging, particularly since they may consider moving to a senior living community as a blow to their independence. Many older adults stubbornly avoid discussing the topic of senior living because they're afraid they'll be forced to move out of their homes. Many families and spouses tend to tiptoe around the subject because they're unsure how their loved ones may react.

In fact, nothing could be further from the truth.

RESIDENTS OF...
senior communities are **2 to 5** times more likely than non-residents to participate in new activities.*



DON'T WAIT...

for a health crisis to get started looking for the right senior living option for you or a loved one.

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THE VARENITA® ADVANTAGE.

AN UNENDING COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION.

We are dedicated to creating a rich and fulfilling lifestyle for today's mature adults through a unique mix of innovation, state-of-the-art communities, and exceptional care. This is Varenita. This is senior living ReEnvisioned. Choosing the right senior living community can seem difficult, but after you understand the impressive advantages Varenita has to offer, the choice will be easy.



Impressive communities specifically designed for today's discerning seniors.

Varenita's award-winning communities offer a modern approach to senior living that gives you a unique and enriching sense of connection. This approach combines the latest innovations in senior living space dynamics and wellness science to create age-inclusive environments that benefit the health and well-being of our residents. We use biophilic design to bring nature into our communities. And at Varenita, you'll find interaction and connection know no boundaries. This is why our design team applies the same level of attention and detail to the design of our courtyards and outdoor spaces as they do to our innovative interior spaces.



VIBRANT AGING

Our cutting-edge wellness philosophy.

Vibrant Aging was designed in collaboration with industry-leading experts in the fields of geriatrics, dementia prevention and care, rehabilitation, infection control, and senior living. This signature philosophy forms the foundation for all of our innovative resident care programs and activities.





INNOVATIVE CARE

3 attractive living options in one amazing community

At Varenita, we offer a personalized approach to assisted living care that is designed for primarily independent seniors who are looking for a rich and rewarding lifestyle with an enhanced level of support.

Our holistic memory care program is designed for those residents living with Alzheimer's disease or related dementias. It combines engaging, secure memory care neighborhoods with a stimulating, person-centered lifestyle.

Our unique and industry leading **AssistedPlus** care program is built around an inclusive "open campus" model. It is specifically designed for residents who are experiencing the early symptoms of memory loss or Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI) but may not require the full attention or secure environment of a traditional memory program.

PEACE OF MIND FOR YOU.

At Varenita, you'll have the security of knowing that you or your loved one is being cared for 24 hours a day by highly trained, dedicated senior living professionals and supportive, compassionate team members.

FIVE-STAR RESTAURANT-STYLE DINING

Delicious, healthy garden to table cuisine

Varenita offers residents and their families an impressive mix of delicious cuisine and rich dining experiences. Our accomplished chef and culinary team create an ever-changing menu of delicious entrées made with organic, locally sourced ingredients across three beautiful dining venues. These include vegetarian, gluten-free, and specially designed dishes for residents with specific dietary needs. In addition, we have a registered dietitian available to help with residents' nutritional needs.



VIBRANT WELLNESS-BASED ACTIVITIES

All Varenita communities offer an impressive mix of fun and engaging experiences designed to stimulate the mind and provide a rewarding sense of purpose. These include dynamic activities such as concerts, and exercise, cooking and art classes, and more.



SECURITY & PROTECTION

We are leading the industry in resident safety

At Varenita, we are passionate about providing the highest level of safety and protection for the residents. All of our communities employ comprehensive safety procedures and use the latest technology, such as state-of-the-art ventilation technology, comprehensive medication management, easy-to-use in-room safety systems, electronic health record protection, and so much more.

TECHNOLOGY ENHANCED LIVING

Enriching residents through state-of-the-art technology

We understand the positive impact connection has on the lives of residents and their families. This is why we use the latest technology to such as robust and secure broadband networks, dedicated Wi-Fi in each apartment, and advanced wireless listening systems for hard of hearing residents. Technologies like these encourage interaction and create an environment where neighbors and caregivers become friends and family.



TO FIND OUT MORE...

about Varenita or which senior living solution is best for you or your loved one, call us today. Our friendly and knowledgeable staff are ready to help.

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Please visit

varenita.com



WEST COBB
(470) 750-3500
Varenita.com/WestCobb

WESTLAKE
(805) 413-3300
Varenita.com/Westlake

SIMI VALLEY
(805) 327-1100
Varenita.com/SimiValley

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Re**Envision** Senior Living

VARENITA OF SIMI VALLEY
 Assisted living facility #567610007

VARENITA OF WEST COBB
 Assisted living facility #ALC000336

VARENITA OF WESTLAKE
 Assisted living facility #565850150

