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## Aging in Place: Pros and Cons



A vast majority of older adults (77%) say they want to remain in their own homes as they age. Of course! Home is comfortable: We know where everything is—in the house, and also in the neighborhood and town. Friends, doctors, grocery store. We know how to get around quickly and easily. Plus, the emotional benefits of memories, identity, and history are baked into the walls of a home.

But for many, the concept of staying put is based on how things are now and doesn't factor in the changes that are bound to come: The need for help with shopping and meal preparation, housekeeping and repairs, yardwork, and transportation. And in the very last chapters of life, assistance with tasks such as bathing, dressing, and continence issues.

There is also the possibility of dementia (33% for persons 85 and older), which may prompt a need for help earlier than imagined. And with that, the fact of care providers coming in and out of the house.

### If you plan on aging in place, it may be necessary to

- **remodel your home.** Very few houses are built to meet the needs of an older adult. You may need better lighting, or a bathroom downstairs. Plus, the house will continue to age and have maintenance issues.
- **arrange for transportation.** Most of us outlive our ability to drive by seven to ten years. Is your current home conveniently located in terms of buses, ride sharing, or other options? If not, you may find yourself more homebound than you want to be.
- **budget for assistance.** Maybe you plan to rely on your kids or friends when the time comes that you need help. Despite good intentions, they may not be available. And if you are partnered, what happens if your spouse passes before you do? How will you accomplish the things they used to handle? Paying for help gets expensive quickly, and more so as we face increasing shortages of professional caregivers.
- **recognize change is inevitable.** Many of the reasons you want to stay where you are, are out of your control. Friends will die or move to be closer to their kids. Doctors will retire. Stores will close. In that context, does staying put hold the same appeal?

**And none of this addresses the key disadvantage of aging in place: Isolation and its companions, depression and anxiety.** Twenty percent of older adults speak with three or fewer people over the course of a week. Technology and video chatting can help. But again, you must be proactive to avoid the very real hazards of loneliness.

**Would you like help planning to age in place well?**

**Give us a call at 206-456-5155.**



Aging Wisdom —  
Your Experts in  
Aging Well

**206-456-5155**

Aging Wisdom supports individuals and families in King and south Snohomish Counties as they plan for aging.

Give us a call at 206-456-5155 to find out how we can support you.