



HOW TO DECIDE:

Assisted Living vs.
Independent Living

What should you do when your loved one's ability to live independently declines? Perhaps Dad forgets his medications, Mom can't walk independently, and you are concerned about their safety and well-being. It's troubling to see loved ones decline during their senior years. And while aging is inevitable, there are options available to provide needed care and supervision in an incredible community!



Aging in one's own home can create increasing physical, mental, emotional, and social demands on seniors and can leave them isolated. How can families wisely prepare for a change of residence in order to ensure their loved one's safety and well-being?

The future is bright with the variety of senior living opportunities offered today. Begin by confirming the need for a senior's change in residence. Next, discover the differences between assisted living communities and independent living facilities in order to discover the ideal environment for your loved one.

ANTICIPATE THE POSSIBILITY OF A NECESSARY CHANGE

Prior to the need for a senior's change of residence, discuss relocation options as a family. You might want to tour some possibilities initially, to see how each community can meet the needs of your loved one. If the time comes that your loved one needs more care than they are able to give themselves, you'll be thankful you educated yourself in advance about senior living opportunities. You can give them realistic ideas about the available options.

CONSIDER TWO POPULAR SENIOR LIVING OPTIONS

Two popular choices are **independent living** facilities and **assisted living** communities. What's the difference? At first glance, many opt for independent living facilities based on the lower initial price. But others prefer an assisted living community that offers their loved one medical help when needed. Choosing an option where your family member can continue to live as needs increase provides long-term continuity of relationships and security, which creates satisfying senior years.

The path to your loved one's ideal living environment involves three steps:

- 1** Confirm the need for a senior's change in residence—a need for community and/or assistance with activities of daily living.
- 2** Understand the similarities and differences between assisted living and independent living.
- 3** Evaluate the ideal environment for your loved one.



Basic similarities between independent living facilities and assisted living communities include:

ACTIVITIES

Both independent living facilities and assisted living communities provide a variety of activities almost daily. Meaningful activities engage the mind, strengthen the body, and encourage the soul. Seniors who socialize regularly find themselves at a decreased risk of mental and physical health problems. Quality activities such as gentle exercise, singing, celebrations, Bible study, and local outings increase one's quality of life and overall satisfaction. Senior living provides activities staff who facilitate a wide variety of fun for residents daily. Enriching, engaging, and entertaining activities give seniors something to look forward to and enjoy.

FRIENDSHIPS

The idea of moving into an independent living facility or an assisted living community may be intimidating at first, but with a little initiative, seniors develop friendships and quality relationships in their new residence. When seniors dine with others daily, friendships emerge, and conversations bring joy to their hearts. They share stories from the past and make new memories in the present, combining to bring fulfillment to their lives.

MEALS

The beauty of senior living lies in the exchange of past responsibilities for present conveniences. The simplicity of going to the dining room for nutritious, thoughtfully prepared meals frees seniors to enjoy the people and activities they love most. And families appreciate knowing their loved one has delicious meals to savor with their friends, while getting much needed nutrition.

LANDSCAPING/HOUSEKEEPING

Senior living lifts the burden of indoor housekeeping and outdoor landscaping responsibilities. Seniors enjoy clean, well-kept residences, and well-manicured outdoor landscapes. Their energy and resources are no longer spread thin between the many responsibilities of maintaining their own home; instead, they use their energy to engage in meaningful relationships with family and friends.

INDEPENDENT LIVING FACILITIES AND ASSISTED LIVING COMMUNITIES ARE **NOT** NURSING HOMES

Clearly, independent living facilities and assisted living communities are not anything like a nursing home. Nursing homes are designed for those needing extensive medical care 24/7. Independent living facilities and assisted living communities are for seniors who live as independently as possible, and enjoy activities with others.

Basic differences between independent living facilities and assisted living communities

Independent living facilities

Independent living facilities are for people who are able to live independently but do not want to maintain a home. Many people prefer living in a community with others their age who share similar interests. An independent living facility provides diverse social activities. Most independent living facilities also offer prepared meals and a range of amenities.

Assisted living communities

Assisted living communities are for people needing varying levels of assistance, and who wish to live as independently as possible for as long as possible. Residents in assisted living facilities range from folks who are completely independent to those who are no longer able to live by themselves. Assisted living communities offer help with ADLs such as bathing, dressing, laundry, housekeeping, and assistance with medications.

Most assisted living facilities create a service plan for each individual resident upon admission. The service plan details the personalized services required by the resident and guaranteed by the facility. The plan is updated regularly to assure that the resident receives the appropriate care if his or her condition changes.

Assisted living residents likely don't have to move as they age. They build relationships upon entering as a resident, then grow in those same relationships even if their need for care increases.

INDEPENDENT LIVING FACILITIES USUALLY PROVIDE:

- ✓ Meals
- ✓ Housekeeping
- ✓ Landscaping
- ✓ Activities
- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Wellness programs
- ✓ Security
- ✓ Base rate: \$2,675 and up
- ✓ ADL assistance - administered by a third-party and billed separately. Frequently, the third-party is a Home Health Agency that is housed inside the independent living facility: \$900 and up
- ✓ Medication Reminders: \$650 and up

ASSISTED LIVING COMMUNITIES USUALLY PROVIDE:

- ✓ Meals
- ✓ Housekeeping
- ✓ Landscaping
- ✓ Activities
- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Wellness programs
- ✓ Security
- ✓ Base rate: \$3200
- ✓ ADL assistance: \$450 and up
- ✓ Medication management - Certified staff administers medicines to residents: \$350 and up
- ✓ Personal hygiene - bathing/showering, grooming, oral care, and nail care
- ✓ Dressing
- ✓ The assisted living staff is trained in medical emergencies
- ✓ On-call RN 24/7

FACTORS TO CONSIDER REGARDING INDEPENDENT LIVING FACILITIES

Unregulated.

When seniors need medication reminders or activities of daily living (ADL) help, they incur additional charges, yet often don't realize it until they receive a bill from the Home Health Agency housed inside the independent living facility. Medicare does not cover Home Health services that are on-going.

After-hours staff is usually a receptionist. With no medical personnel on-site after hours, if medical needs arise, your loved one will either decide to tough it out or an ambulance will be called.

Independent living facilities may work well for seniors who stay independent for the duration of their lives.

Independent living facilities can cost more in the long run for those who need ADL assistance or other medical services, because these services are purchased from a separate Home Health Agency. Seniors who need significant assistance may end up paying more for less care and fewer medical services.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER REGARDING ASSISTED LIVING COMMUNITIES

Regulated by the Oklahoma Health Department

Assisted living communities have a higher base price than independent living facilities, but residents may save in the long run because:

- ✓ No surprise bills come in from third-party care.
- ✓ Needs are discussed and planned for upon entry.
- ✓ Residents in assisted living communities don't necessarily have to move when their level of care increases.



Questions to help discover optimal senior living for your loved one

- 1 Assess the need.**
What are my loved one's current needs?
- 2 Anticipate the future.**
What might my loved one need in the next 12 months? What might my loved one need beyond 12 months?
- 3 Evaluate the options.**
How does my loved one feel about the choices between independent living facilities and assisted living communities?
- 4 Check with the doctor.**
Your loved one's doctor knows their physical and mental state better than anyone. Consider accompanying them on an office visit to their primary care physician for a physical. Discuss their current needs and anticipate any future needs.
- 5 Decide together.**
Take into account your family member's input and your observations of their needs.

Consider your loved one's future needs

The process of deciding which facility is appropriate for your loved one is based on their current and future needs. Independent living facilities work well for some people, but a little too often, they may be presented as the right solution for everyone. Individuals have unique needs, and if their need for medical assistance increases, assisted living communities may be a better long-term choice.

Think long-term during your decision-making process

The best overall solution helps seniors maintain the greatest amount of independence, dignity, and quality of life long-term. These are precious years, and your loved one deserves to live in the ideal residence with a caring staff to meet their needs.





SEE FOR YOURSELF WHY TULSA LOVES THE PARKE ASSISTED LIVING COMMUNITY

Join us for a no-obligation, no-pressure tour. You'll enjoy seeing The Parke, and getting to know the services and activities available. We encourage tours around meal time so you can taste-test the food. You're welcome to participate in an activity, meet our staff, and get a good feel for how much residents love living at The Parke - and why.

A FAMILY DECISION

We understand you are busy, and there may be multiple family members contributing to this decision. Start the process by taking a look at our website, activities calendar, and testimonials, then give us a call so we can answer any questions that you and your family may have, and set up a tour. Remember to ask about our VA benefits!

COMING IN FROM OUT OF TOWN? NO PROBLEM.

We are happy to work with your specific situation. We recommend scheduling at least an hour for the tour so we can get to know each other and discover the very best option for your loved one. Contact us today at 918-249-1262 or email our Admissions Director, Rachael Manning at Rachaelm@TheParkeAssistedLiving.com