

What are the Pros and Cons of Nursing Homes?



It's a question we've all had to ask ourselves. Should we put a loved one into an assisted living facility?

Obviously, this is not an easy decision to make, but reading up a little more might help.

What do most people look for in a nursing home? What are some of the upsides? Contrarily, what are the risks and downsides? What are the pros and cons of nursing homes?

Though the final decision is ultimately yours, perhaps some of the information below can make things easier.

Pro: No Need for House Care

It's no secret that as we get older, our bodies tend to break down. This makes tasks that were once easy, difficult or even impossible. Not to mention the fact that we all have that one relative who insists on doing chores well after their health makes it dangerous.

Thankfully, nursing homes and assisted living programs make such duties a thing of the past. Whether you opt for assisted living or a nursing home, your loved one will have their domicile maintained by staff.

Pro: Advanced Medical and Personal Care

In addition to the increased difficulty of housework, many aspects of personal care may also require some measure of assistance. Perhaps your loved one has trouble getting dressed, or needs someone to bathe them. In a nursing home, they will have staff to assist them.

Maybe your mother or father suffers from Alzheimer's or another medical condition that requires the assistance of a medical professional. Usually, a nursing home will be staffed round the clock with nurses and even doctors to attend to healthcare needs.

This probably goes without saying, but constant, personal care means that there's no danger of falling down and being left on the floor for hours on end. Any decent nursing home will have regular room checks performed by staff.

Pro: Social Opportunities

Nursing homes often set up events and activities that allow the residents to pass time and socialize with each other. This can be particularly important, since aging has a tendency to isolate us. Seniors outside nursing homes often have very few people their own age to talk with.

Some of the best facilities will have multiple options for your loved one to stay active. Some never make residents participate.

Studies have actually shown that seniors who are given more of a choice in which activities they want to participate in tend to be both happier and healthier.

Of course, a study can only ever be so thorough. It is very possible that residents who are happier and healthier to begin with are the ones who are more likely to participate in activities.

Either way, it might be worth the risk.

Pro/Con: Structured Lifestyle

Structure is a funny thing, because everyone responds to it differently. Some people may do better when there is a plan in place. Others get irritated at the very idea of having to commit to such a rigid schedule, even if they're the ones who made it.

To be sure, there are definite advantages to planning out your day. It may help you to remember things, or keep you from getting bored. However, this way of life can also feel suffocating.

For instance, many are adjusted to eating at a different time, or perhaps not setting a time and just eating when they're hungry.

Basically, any scheduled event might rub people the wrong way. You may want to consider other options if your loved one is more of a free spirit.

Con: Money

Since nursing homes are full-time facilities complete with trained staff, it should come as no surprise that they can be pricey. According to AARP, keeping a loved one in a nursing home can cost tens of thousands of dollars per year.

This can be especially distressing since one of the biggest motivating factors when making life-changing decisions is often money. If one of the reasons you're considering a nursing home is because the cost of taking care of your relative is getting to be more than you can afford, you may not find much of a solution in a nursing home.

That being said, you won't have to shoulder the burden alone. Medicare can help cover some of the costs of assisted living facilities and nursing homes, provided you have long term care insurance. Additionally, some facilities have programs of their own to insure greater access to care for those that need it.

You may even want to look around more, since there are bound to be programs designed specifically for people in your situation.

Potential Con: Poor Care

Over the years, nursing homes have developed a reputation for being nightmarish places. Still worse is that many of the more atrocious ones still exist. Stories of elder abuse and neglect abound, and everyone fears turning their family members over to the mercy of such a place.

The good news is that you don't have to go in blind. There are plenty of reviews and reports online that should let you know which places are comfortable and which you should avoid like the plague.

Pros and Cons of Nursing Homes

The decision of whether or not to put a senior relative in a nursing home is a tricky one, especially since only some are actually good. Regardless of which home you choose, there are both pros and cons of Nursing homes.

Nursing homes can also be very expensive, and those who prefer a less rigid routine may not take well to the scheduled structure of a nursing home.

On the other hand, nursing homes can also provide help you and your family would not have been able to handle. They also keep your loved one from falling over or in some other way hurting themselves. Plus, it's a great way to get your loved one up and moving so they can stay healthy and make friends.

Is a Nursing Home Right for Your Loved One?

A nursing home for seniors is right for some senior citizens. But it's definitely not the best choice for everyone.

If the senior in your life is more comfortable at home, consider taking advantage of the senior home care services available to you. Whether you only need to use the services a few hours every week or you need them 24/7, they'll allow your loved one to get the care they need in the privacy of their own home.

Contact us to learn more about how home care services can prove to be very beneficial for many seniors.



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