

USC Verdugo Hills Hospital

Keck Medicine of USC



SOLO AGING

Simply defined as living on your own, you are often the sole person making decisions about your present and your future. It is important to consider the life you want to live and the people you want involved in your care. There are many things to attend to as a solo ager like place of residence, levels of functioning, social ties, and more. Consider your daily life and assess how much you can do on your own and what you need more help for.

Often times, we need to plan ahead and make sure those closest to us know what we want for ourselves. Use this sheet as a guide to start thinking about what you can plan for before a crisis arises. Be sure to communicate your wants and needs with those closest to you and to your providers.

The [USC VHH Community Resource Center for Aging](#) can help, contact us at **818-949-4033** or aging-resources@med.usc.edu. To learn more, visit: uscvh.org

AGING IN PLACE

Health

Keeping up to date and being proactive in your health care will aid the planning process. The more you know ahead of time will limit the need for crisis planning. Here are a few things to tackle to keep on top of your wellbeing:

- Establish regular visits with a primary care provider (PCP).
- Consider how you will access your medications through pick up or delivery.
- Set up a plan for accessing nutritious foods.
- Maintain physical activity and consult with PCP about any changes in fitness routine.
- Assess your mental health and set up consultations with a therapist as needed.

For additional resources, see the [Food and Medication Delivery](#) resource page and [Mental Health](#) resource page.

Home Safety

Each year one in three adults over the age of 65 fall and 2 million are treated in emergency departments for fall-related injuries. The long-term consequences of fall injuries, such as hip fractures and traumatic brain injuries, can impact the health and independence of older adults. Studies show that a combination of interventions can reduce falls significantly.

For more information, see the [Fall Prevention and Safety Measures](#) resource page.

Retirement Income

Social Security retirement benefit can provide income, but may not cover all of your expenses; it is essential to identify other ways to pay for your expenses as you age.

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) provides monthly checks to people with little/no income or resources. You may be eligible for programs like CalFresh and Medi-Cal, to support in meeting other needs.

See the Medi-Cal resource page for more details.

Avoid fraud: Older adults lose billions of dollars each year to scams and fraud. Learn more about how to protect yourself and your money. [Consult the AARP Fraud Watch Network.](#)

Social

Isolation and loneliness are the two biggest risk factors for poor mental health in later life. Keep up with your social network or develop new ones and stay connected to your community. Consider your interests and goals and search for activities in your community:

- Affinity & Social Clubs**
- Faith-Based Organizations**
- Group Exercise Classes**
- Library Programs**
- Senior & Community Centers**
- Solo Aging Workshops**
- Volunteering**

Legal & Financial

There are legal and financial considerations to plan for as you age. Communicate with people you trust about your wishes moving forward. Keep your important documents in one safe place and tell someone you trust where to find it. Consult professional services to get support with:

- Advance Health Care Directive**
- Will or Living Trust**
- Durable Power of Attorney for Finance**
- Long-Term Care Insurance**

See the Legal and Financial resources page.

Housing

As we age, we often find ourselves with different levels of functioning. There are a variety of housing options that can provide a comfortable and safe environment. Consider your needs and to find appropriate housing:

- Independent living**
- Assisted Living**
- Skilled Nursing**
- Memory Care**

See the Medi-Cal resource page for potential ways of financing care.

NOTE: *This does not constitute a recommendation or endorsement of these agencies, but can be utilized as a convenience in locating services to meet specific needs that an individual or family member may have.*
