

The background of the slide is a photograph of an elderly African American couple dancing in a home. The woman, on the left, is wearing a dark floral dress, a pearl necklace, and large white earrings. She is smiling and looking at the man. The man, on the right, has white hair and a beard, and is wearing a light blue shirt and a patterned tie. He is also smiling and looking at the woman. His hands are raised in a dance gesture. The background shows a window with sheer curtains and a framed picture on the wall.

# Age In Place: Empowering Independence at Home





# About WIHA

- **Mission:** To improve the health and well-being of all people as we age by disseminating evidence-based programs and practices and by engaging in collaborative public health strategies in Wisconsin and beyond.
- <https://wihealthyaging.org>
- **Age Well Newsletter**





# Agenda

- 1 My Background
- 2 Occupational Therapy
- 3 Aging in Place Definition
- 4 Strategies to Successfully Age in Place
- 5 Transitioning to New Home
- 6 Home Assessment and Resources

# Introduction



**Nevaria Rumery**

Doctoral Occupational Therapy Student at  
Nova Southeastern University  
Intern at Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging





# Occupational Therapy Elevator Pitch

Occupational Therapy is a health profession that focuses on helping people be able to participate in meaningful activities, or as we call them, occupations. We define occupation as everything one does from the moment they wake up to the moment they go to sleep. We are client-centered, holistic, and occupation-based.





## *Poll Question #1*

*What is true about  
Aging in Place?*



# What is Aging in Place?



---

“The ability to live in one’s own home & community safely, independently, & comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level.”

Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2017





# Newer Proposed Term: “Aging in the Right Place”

This term broadens the idea of  
Aging in Place to be more  
encompassing  
(Rogers et al., 2020)







# House vs. Home

House is the physical building

“Home encompasses physical, emotional, social, and symbolic meanings developed through interactions over time” (Prentice et al., 2023)

When looking at Aging in Place, we must remember we’re looking at a home, not just a house



# Data of Aging in Place

The AARP conducted a survey in 2021 and determined that **77% of adults** 50 years and older hope to remain within their homes for as long as possible.

Specifically in Michigan, **87% of Michiganders** age 65+ said it is likely they will stay in their current home for the rest of their lives, yet only **44%** have made home modifications, already moved to a more age-friendly place, or both (University of Michigan National Poll on Healthy Aging, June 2025).

# Benefits of Aging in Place



Sense of Home, Identity, Belonging, and Familiarity



Increased Independence or Control over Daily Activities



Social Connection with Friends, Family, and Neighbors



Can be more cost-effective or affordable



(Owusu et al., 2023; Prentice et al., 2023; Ratnayake et al.,



# What's Necessary to Age in Place?

1

Plan Ahead

2

Identify Need  
for Support

3

Make Home Safe  
and Accessible

4

Learn about  
Community  
Resources

5

Know the Cost

6

Maintain Overall  
Wellness

# 1

## Plan Ahead

- Important for all ages, including first-time home buyers or when looking for a new home
- Must be continuous
- Allows you to have a voice

**Strategies: Regular family meetings, discuss with healthcare provider, use [Planyourlifespan.org](https://planyourlifespan.org)**

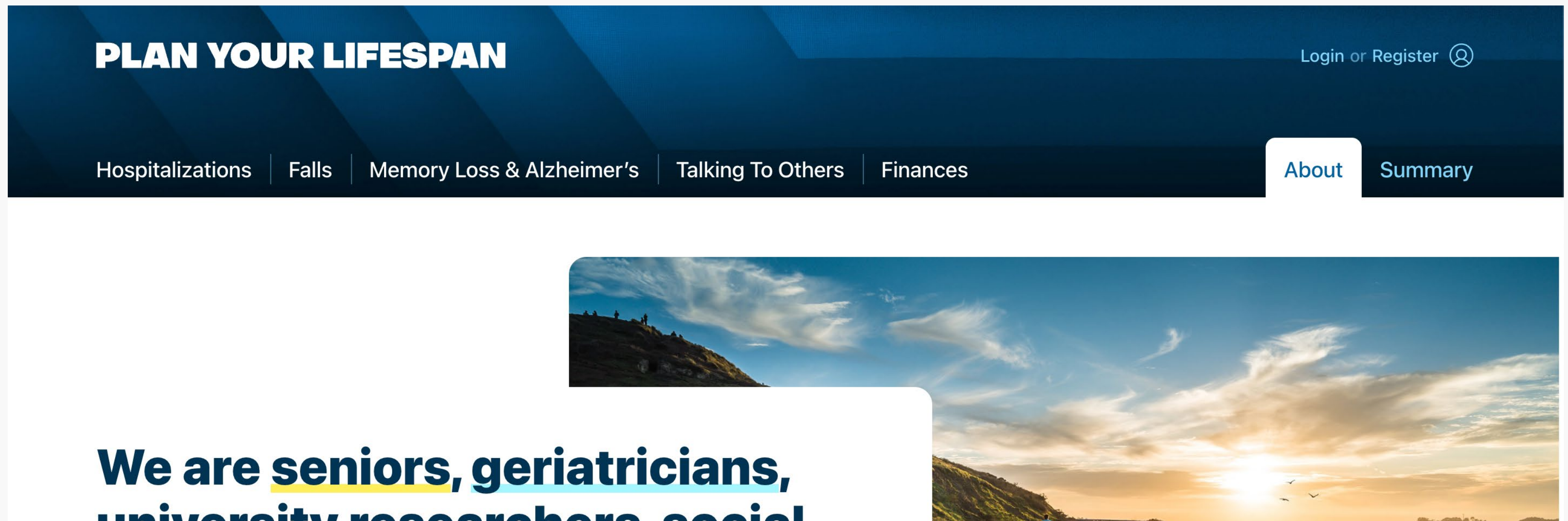




# Planyourlifespan.org


Helps you plan for the future in an easy -to -follow walk through. Can help ease conversations with others.

[Planyourlifespan.org](https://Planyourlifespan.org)



The screenshot shows the top portion of the Plan Your Lifespan website. The header is dark blue with the title 'PLAN YOUR LIFESPAN' in white. To the right is a 'Login or Register' link with a user icon. Below the header is a navigation bar with links for 'Hospitalizations', 'Falls', 'Memory Loss & Alzheimer's', 'Talking To Others', 'Finances', 'About' (highlighted), and 'Summary'. The hero section features a large image of a sunset over a hill. On the left, there is a white text box containing the text: 'We are seniors, geriatricians, university researchers, social'.

**PLAN YOUR LIFESPAN**

Login or Register 

Hospitalizations | Falls | Memory Loss & Alzheimer's | Talking To Others | Finances | **About** | Summary

**We are seniors, geriatricians,**  
university researchers, social

(Lindquist et al.,



# 2

## Identify Need for Support

- **Home-based care:** assistance with daily living activities by a skilled nurse or licensed healthcare professional
- **Respite care provider:** Can help with household tasks, personal care, transportation, or medication management
- **Meal services:** Explore community offers like Meals on Wheels or Mom's Meals
- **Ask Family Members**



# 3

## Make Home Safe and Accessible

- **Includes quick changes:**
  - Adding motion detecting night lights
  - Removing clutter or rugs
  - Moving most used items to easy reached spot
- **Includes structural changes:**
  - Adding grab bars or ramps
  - Changing bathroom layout

Previous Age Well Series on  
Home Modifications:  
<https://wihealthyaging.org/2024/07/29/webinar-september-5-2024/>





# Home Safety Challenge

<https://fallsfreewi.org/prevent-falls/surround/interactive-home-walk-through/>



HOME

PREVENT FALLS

EVENTS

FOR PROFESSIONALS ▾

HOME SAFETY CHALLENGE

ABOUT

Give



English

A photograph of a kitchen interior, showing wooden cabinets, a countertop with various items, and a window with a view of a snowy landscape. The text "Interactive Home Safety Challenge" is overlaid in white.

Interactive Home Safety Challenge



# Learn about Community Resources

- Prepared for medical emergencies
- Learn of community workshops - fall prevention, social connection
- Look into government resources or public transportation options: Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs), local Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs)



# 5

## Know the Cost



### Planning finances

National average for Age in Place renovations ranges from \$3,000 to \$15,000 (U.S. News, 2024)



### Know your house

Older homes are more difficult to renovate



### Renovations take time

Importance of planning ahead



### Other available options

Learn the cost of local independent or assisted living facilities

(National Institute on Aging,

# 6

## Maintain Overall Wellness

**Remain physically active**

**Participate in leisure activities, which add to your identity**

**Maintain strong social connections with neighbors, friends, and family**

**Be involved with your community. Join community events, volunteer, and explore community workshops.**





# Cons to Aging in Place

## 1. Safety concerns

- a. Fall risk, medication management

## 2. Decreased social connection

- a. Potential for isolation, feelings of loneliness, reduced social opportunities

## 3. Financial burden of home modifications

- a. Can be expensive, time consuming

## 4. Home is a burden to take care of

- a. Cleaning, changing light bulbs, managing repairs



(Auriemma et al., 2024)

## Poll Question #2

*Have you ever  
discussed with  
family members or  
close friends about  
moving to a new  
home for safety?*



# Deciding When it's Time to Relocate

---

- **Regular Meetings:** Meet regularly with family, friends, or healthcare providers to prepare for future changes.
- **Honest and Realistic:** Weigh the pros and cons of options honestly; family may notice things you don't.
- **Kindness, Patience, and Understanding:** Approach conversations with this mindset.
- **Acceptance:** Accept when it may be time to transition to a new living situation.

(Kraun et al.,  
2022)

# Common Reasons to Relocate

- **Multiple Falls or Fear of Falling**
  - **Vestibular Dysfunction:** This encompasses numerous disorders when the structures of our inner ear are not working properly, which affects our balance. This leads to dizziness, lightheadedness, and vertigo.
- **Reduced Responsibilities of House Maintenance**
- **Socialization and Activities**
- **Assistance with Daily Activities**





# Transitioning to a New Home

# What is Involved in Transitional Care?

---



Includes logistical preparations, education of the individual and their families, and healthcare providers involved in the coordination.



Recognizing that transitioning to a new home can lead to a sudden change in identity, level of autonomy, daily routine, social status, disruption to leisure, and can lead to feelings of trauma or loss.



Engagement in leisure, finding a sense of home, and rediscovering or continuing one's identity are necessary when transitioning or moving to a new residence.



# Independent Vs. Assisted Living

## Independent Living

Private residence managed by you independently

Managing self-care tasks independently

Prepare meals in your own kitchen or dine at the dining center.

You can participate in community activities or engage with your neighbors.



## Assisted Living

Private apartment or suite with assistance for home maintenance

Daily support for self-care activities with on-site medical professionals

Daily meals are provided, or you can prepare your own in the kitchenette.

Organized social or leisure activities, group outings, and meals in common area

# Benefits of Independent or Assisted Living

**Age -friendly designs:** Accessible homes with manageable spaces

**Maintenance -Free Living:** No responsibilities of lawn care, snow removal, or household repairs

**Social Engagement:** Sense of community with social activities and events with peers

**Access to Amenities:** Dining services, transportation, and access to healthcare

**Peace of mind:** 24-hour security, emergency response systems, and on-site staff



# Transitioning to New Home



## 3 Phases of Transition

- **Pre-Transition**
  - Seek information on process, express emotions or anxieties, find support in others, time to explore the right placement
- **Mid -Transition**
  - Compare your current habits to the routine of your new home, formal introduction between new neighbors, establishment of sense of home, time to pack
- **Post-Transition**
  - Explore your expectations and preferences, communicate experience with others, contact with family/friends, time to re-establish previous routines

(Groenvynck et al.,  
2022)

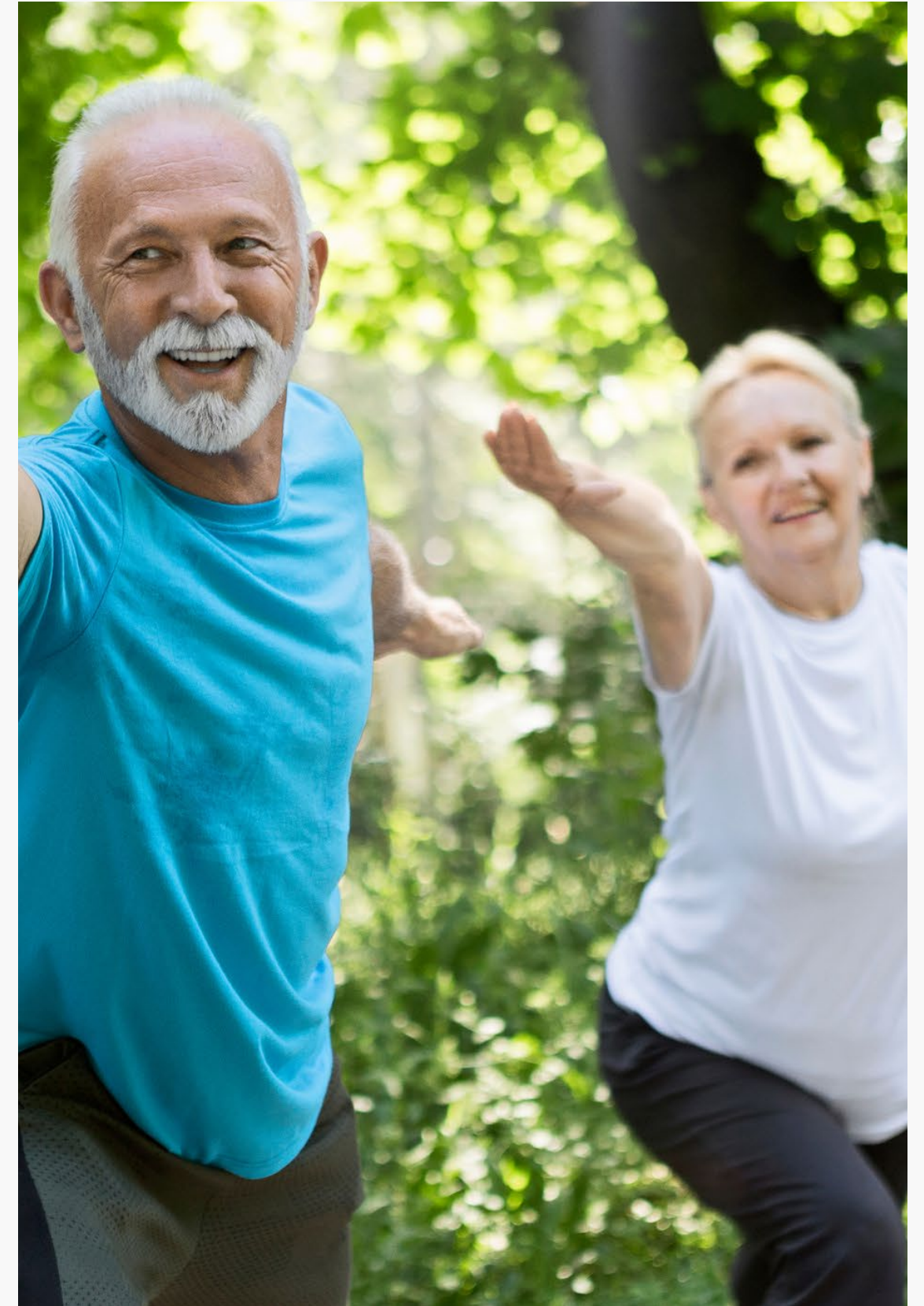
## Poll Question #3

*What are some things  
one can do to improve  
their experience after  
transitioning to a new  
residence?*



# Active Strategies During Transition

- **Health Promotion:** Physical and mental activities
- **Connections to Outside World:** Scheduling community visitors, sending/receiving mail, placing possessions in new place
- **New Routine:** Finding a fresh routine and rhythm, rekindle old hobbies or discover new hobbies, collaborate with others
- **Participate in Social Events:** Relating to others helps you find a sense of belonging, engage in social leisure activities
- **Engage in Spiritual Activities and Volunteer Activities:**  
These can promote adjustment and perception of new home



(Mueller et al., 2021; Prentice et al., 2022)



# Passive Strategies During Transition

- **Peer Support from Fellow Residents:**
  - Finding support and guidance, sharing experiences, eating with others
- **Staff Support:**
  - Making connections, they help it feel like home
- **Prior familiarity:**
  - Knowing the layout, knowing the place or some of the residents

(Mueller et al., 2021; Prentice et al., 2023)





# Home Assessment

- **Local Occupational Therapist or Age in Place Company**
  - Certified Age in Place Specialists (CAPS) provide a thorough evaluation of your home
- **Complete a Self -Assessment of Your Home**
  - Follow a checklist to consider what home modifications or changes may be necessary for your safety and wellness



# Local Resource List

- Includes varying resources within Wisconsin to seek out a home safety assessment or Age in Place modification recommendations

Link to site:

<https://wihealthyaging.org/2025/06/04/webinar-july-15-2025/>

## Local Wisconsin Resources

To ensure you and your home are prepared to safely Age in Place. Seek out an in-home assessment to learn what changes or modifications may be needed.



### Home Safety Innovations - La Crosse, WI

- Two occupational therapists own this practice, they will provide home safety assessments within a 120 mile radius.
- [Homesafetyinnovations.com/](https://homesafetyinnovations.com/)

### Thrive at Home - Madison, WI



- A mobile private practice owned by an occupational therapist that provides home safety assessments and more.

- Thrive at Home family of



# Age in Place Home Checklist

- Includes various categories, such as rooms or items.
- Can be overwhelming, one could begin planning ahead by addressing 1 or 2 categories each year
- Link to site:  
<https://wihealthyaging.org/2025/06/04/webinar-july-15-2025/>



## Age in Place Home Checklist

The checklist below can help you prepare for successfully Aging in Place by spotting potential hazards to address or changes to make. Use this tool to determine any necessary changes or repairs to enhance your safety and wellness in your home. Not all suggested modifications may be required. Remember, it's necessary to regularly reassess your home's safety as your needs change.

### BATHROOM

	Install walk-in shower rather than a tub to avoid having to step over the tub wall.
	Place a shower chair or bench in the shower for decreased energy spent and decreased slipping risk.

# Other Resources on Website

## Age in Place with Dementia



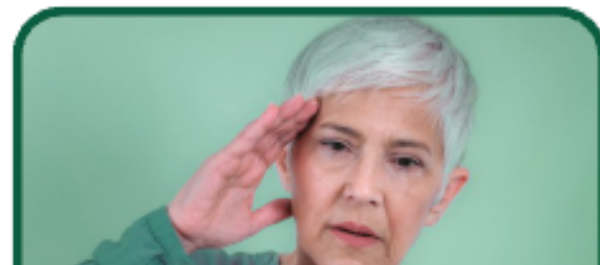
Staying within one's home as they age with dementia can be ideal to continue living in a familiar environment. However, it's important to address any safety concerns to ensure they can live safely at home.



## What is Vestibular Dysfunction?

The vestibular system is located in the inner ears. The structures here detect information and send to the balance system in the brain. If one of the information systems is not working or damaged, the brain may not receive enough information for the balance system to function properly. This can impact your ability to participate in daily activities in your home and community and safely Age in Place.

Two recent reports through the National Institutes of Health discovered that more than one in two people who fell had vestibular dysfunction (Li et al., 2024). The prevalence vestibular dysfunction in



## Age in the Right Place

**Aging in Place** is a term meaning someone's ability to live in their home safely as they grow older. This means anyone at any age can begin planning to "Age In Place" by preparing themselves and their home.

**Aging in the Right Place** means recognizing our individual needs to safely





# Conclusion - Key Takeaways



*It's never too early to think about Aging in Place.*



*There are things we can do to prepare ourselves and our homes for the future.*



*Transitioning to a new home is another option. Explore these options and discuss with others.*



*Implement wellness strategies when transitioning to a new home to maintain your identity and thrive.*

# Feedback

- Upon exit of zoom, please share your thoughts
- Those who complete the eval live will be entered to win a t-shirt!





# Next for Age Well Series

- August 27 1-2pm



Join us to discover how giving your time can give back to your health! This engaging presentation explores the powerful connection between volunteerism and well-being. Learn how helping others can reduce stress, improve mood, increase social connection, and even boost physical health. Whether you're already a volunteer or just curious about getting involved, you'll leave inspired and informed about how acts of service can lead to a happier, healthier life.



Presenters: Peggy Kurth (ADRC of Central Wisconsin) & Tony Omernik (Previously with RSVP)

**August 27**  
**1-2pm**  
**FREE WEBINAR**

[Register Here](#)



# Next for Age Well Series

- September 9, 12:30-2:00pm
- NO RECORDING



## Denying Gravity Film Screening: Staying Strong, Steady, and One Step Ahead

Join the Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging and the Falls Free® Wisconsin Coalition for a special screening of **Denying Gravity** — a powerful, entertaining play that follows Claire, a vibrant retiree whose life takes an unexpected turn after a series of falls.

**Tuesday,  
September 9  
12:30 - 2:00 p.m.  
Virtual on Zoom**

Stick around after the film for a lively discussion with guest expert panelists who will share tips and insights on staying strong, independent, and confident as we age. Panelists include:

- Deputy Chief Jeff Dostalek, Fitch-Rona EMS District
- Dr. Doubara Stucki, UW-Madison
- Dr. Ben Weston, Medical College of Wisconsin

**Register Here**

**wiha**  
Wisconsin Institute  
for Healthy Aging  
<https://wihealthyaging.org>







**Thank you!**  
**Any Questions?**

Nevaria Rumery

Nr1200@mynsu.nova.edu



# Resources - 1

Auriemma C. L., Butt, M. I., McMillan, J., Silvestri, J. A., Chow, C., Bahti, M., Klaiman, T., Harkins, K., Karlawish, J., & Halperon, S. D. (2024). "What choice do we have?" Reactive and proactive decision-making for aging in place with dementia. *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, 72(11), 3398-3412. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jgs.19140>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2017). Healthy places terminology. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/terminology.htm>

Groenvynck, L., Fahkha, A., Boer, B., Hamers, J. P. H., Achterberg, T., Rossum, E., & Verbeek, H. (2022). Interventions to improve the transition from home to nursing home: A scoping review. *The Gerontologist*, 62(7), e369-e383. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnab036>

Kraun, L., Vliegheer, K., Vandamme, M., Holtzheimer, E., Ellen, M., & Achterberg, T. (2022). Older peoples' and informal caregivers' experiences, views, and needs in transitional care decision-making: A systematic review. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 134, 104303. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2022.104303>

Lindquist, L. A., Muhammad, R., Miller-Winder, A. P., Opsasnick, L., Kim, K., Benavente, J. Y., Wolf, M., & Ramirez-Zohfeld, V. (2021). Rationale and study design for decision making & implementation of aging-in-place/long term care plans among older adults. *Contemporary Clinical Trials Communications*, 22, 100756. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.conctc.2021.100756>

Mueller, K. E., Puymbroeck, M., Crowe, B. M., & Davis, N. J. (2021). Adjustment strategies of older adults transitioning into an assisted living facility: Implications for RT Practice. *Therapeutic Recreation Journal*, 55(2), 204-220. <https://doi.org/10.18666/TRJ-2021-V55-I2-10782>



# Resources - 2

National Institute on Aging. (2023, October 23). Aging in place: Growing older at home. <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/aging-place/aging-place-growing-older-home>

Owusu, B., Bivins, B., Marseille, B. R., & Baptiste, D. L. (2023). Aging in place: Programs, challenges and opportunities for promoting healthy aging for older adults. *Nursing Open*, 10(9), 5784–5786. <https://doi.org/10.1002/nop2.1872>

Prentice, K., Hand, C., Misener, L., & Hopkins, J. (2023). Older adults' relocation transitions: Relation of place, leisure and identity. *Activities, Adaptation & Aging*, 47(2), 146–170. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01924788.2022.2056679>

Ratnayake, M., Lukas, S., Brathwaite, S., Neave, J., & Henry, H. (2022). Aging in place: Are we prepared? *Delaware Journal of Public Health*, 8(3), 28–31. <https://doi.org/10.32481/djph.2022.08.007>

Rogers, W. A., Ramadhani, W. A., & Harris, M. T. (2020). Defining Aging in Place: The Intersectionality of Space, Person, and Time. *Innovation in Aging*, 4(4). <https://doi.org/10.1093/geroni/igaa036>