

# ONE-FLOOR LIVING HELPS SENIORS 'AGE IN PLACE'

by Carolyn Christ

Older adults are less likely to need to change residences if their homes have certain features, including no stairs, a new study found.

"Most older adults do not want to move to a nursing home, and supporting older adults to age in the community has potential to improve quality of life and costs for care," said lead study author Marianne Granbom of Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland, and Lund University in Sweden.

Data was analyzed and collected between 2011 and 2015 on 7,197 U.S. adults' ages 65 and older. During that period, about eight percent moved within the community and four percent moved to residential care facilities such as nursing homes and assisted living.

Overall, those who lived alone, had a lower annual income, and visited the hospital dur-

ing the past year were more likely to move. Having a one-floor house or having the kitchen, bedroom and bathroom on one floor were the features most strongly associated with aging in place. Dwellings with elevator access, lifts or stair-glides were also helpful. No other home environment factors, such as entrance accessibility or housing conditions, were associated with relocation.

**For older adults, moving to more age-friendly home environments could help postpone the need for a nursing home, Granbom said.**

The study found that the longer the adults had lived in their current homes, the less



likely they were to move at all. Future studies could incorporate the emotional attachment to home to better understand the complexities of relocation decisions.

Other features such as improved lighting, a no-step entrance, walk-in showers with grab bars, and railings on both sides of indoor stairs could help, said Jon Pynoos of the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, California, who has researched the future of housing for older adults.

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