Accidental falls make up the majority of hospital visits for seniors living alone. Despite the healthy desire to be independent and self-reliant, living alone presents challenges for older adults or those losing their mobility.

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, nine out of ten Americans over age 60 want to stay independent and live in their own home. But over 45 percent of them suffer from one or more chronic illnesses, and 33 percent fall at least once throughout the year.

Simple tasks become exponentially harder for handicapped adults or senior citizens living alone who may not have full range of motion, sharp eyesight or strong bones. But that doesn’t mean older adults can’t live independently by themselves – they must simply be aware of their limitations.

Consider the following solutions to common problems experienced by single seniors.

**Problem:** Transportation struggles.

**Solution:** There are options, but they take collaboration and planning. Seniors can run errands using public transportation, carpools or walking in small groups. Gather friends and plan shopping trips in advance so neighbors, church groups or local Bridge clubs can participate and share rides. Offer to contribute gas money if you don’t have a car or valid license.

**Problem:** Senior falls.

**Solution:** Protect yourself against falls by installing safety supports and grab bars throughout the house, paying special attention to the kitchen, stairs and bathroom.

The bathroom is particularly hazardous – one-third of seniors suffer falls in the bathroom – due to unforgiving surfaces and tasks like getting in and out of the tub. Look into showers tailored around the specific needs of older adults, such as the walk-in shower from Safe Step Walk-In Tub Co. Senior-friendly features like a foldable chair and hand-held shower wand will make showering easy and relaxing once more. See more at www.safesteptub.com/living.

**Problem:** Feelings of isolation or depression.

**Solution:** As a senior, your network often grows smaller as you age, but isolation can be just as detrimental as smoking or obesity. Research from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill discovered that people with strong relationships and social connections live longer than those without.

Get involved in activities like group exercise, pinochle club, bridge tournaments, dance lessons, volunteer efforts or anything that makes you interact with others. Host play dates for local friends and their pets, or round up fellow readers for a book club.