

HOME SAFETY TIPS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this section is to provide our clients with safety tips that may be used to assist them in making their home a safer place to live and increasing accessibility based on their level of mobility.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

- Have emergency phone numbers for police, fire, ambulance, and poison control available.
- Prepare a disaster supply kit and store in an easy-to-access container or duffel bag (first-aid kit, prescribed medicine, water with expiration dates, nonperishable food, can opener, blankets, flashlight, extra batteries, list of physician phone numbers, and other special items needed).
- Prepare an evacuation plan. Post it and review it with family, friends, neighbors, and/or a personal caregiver.
- Have a fire extinguisher and know how to use it.
- Know how to shut off water, gas and electricity at main valves and switches.
- Have a battery-operated radio for emergency information.
- For additional emergency preparedness information, contact the Federal Emergency Management Agency or your local American Red Cross.

GENERAL

- Install smoke detectors and check them monthly. Change batteries at least once a year.
- Avoid walking in stocking feet or wearing smooth-soled shoes on stairs and waxed floors.
- Take time to regain your balance after sitting or lying down.
- Remove throw rugs or secure them with carpet tape to prevent tripping.
- Test stability of tables and chairs before you attempt to use them for support.
- Locate space heaters away from flammable materials and always turn them off before leaving the room.

HOME SAFETY TIPS

STAIRS

- Stairways should have secured, fixed handrails.
- A nonslip surface should be fastened to each step.
- Small or loose rugs should be kept away from the head or foot of a stairway to prevent tripping.
- Keep stairways free of items that could cause tripping.
- Keep stairways well lit and make sure light switches can be operated from both ends of the stairway.
- Consider installing a stair-lift if using the stairs increases the likelihood of an accident.
- Consider installing ramps if using a walker, wheelchair or motorized scooter. Ramps should include handrails or side-guards for both assistance and safety.

ELECTRICAL

- Do not overload electrical systems.
- Check electrical cords to make sure they are not frayed, cracked, worn or otherwise damaged.
- Make sure proper wattage light bulbs are being used in fixtures and lamps.
- If using an extension cord, make sure it is UL approved and make certain it is of adequate wire size for the load it will carry.
- Use cords with polarized or three-prong plugs.

Bedroom

- Place telephone and other frequently used items within easy reach.
- Keep the bedroom uncluttered to prevent tripping.
- Install a night-light and keep a flashlight within easy reach
- Never smoke in bed or in the presence of oxygen delivery equipment.

HOME SAFETY TIPS

BATHROOM

- Keep floor uncluttered to prevent tripping and keep dry to prevent slipping.
- Install mats or nonslip strips in the tub/shower to prevent slipping.
- Install grab bars in the tub/shower and on the wall next to the toilet.
- Use a bath or shower chair if you have difficulty with balance.
- Install a raised toilet seat if you have difficulty with standing.
- Use caution when operating electrical devices in the bathroom to prevent electrical shock.

KITCHEN

- Keep utensils and other frequently used items within easy reach.
- Immediately wipe up any spills with an absorbent towel to prevent slipping.
- Remove area rugs that could cause slipping with area rugs that have rubberized backing.
- Keep kitchen well lit.
- Adjust water heating setting to a lower temperature to prevent burning.
- Install a smoke detector in the kitchen and check it monthly.
- Keep stove free of grease and other flammable materials.
- Always use pot holders on hot pans to prevent burns and always use two hands to lift heavy cookware.