

# PREVENTING FALLS:

## *Making Your Home Safer*

Everyday household items may pose as fall hazards, especially for the elderly. Learn to recognize these items and follow our tips to help you prevent falls in your home.

### Floors

- Secure rugs and loose carpeting or remove throw rugs. Do not use floral / patterned rugs.
- Avoid wax or use non-skid wax.
- Remove clutter from stairs and walkways.

### Lighting

- Provide adequate in all walkways.
- Use lamp shades or frosted bulbs to reduce glare.
- Provide a flashlight if walkway is not well lit.
- Have a qualified person add additional light fixtures. Use the correct bulbs for the light source.
- Open curtains or blinds (unless this causes too much glare).

### Kitchen

- Commonly used items should be located between shoulder and knee level.
- Wipe up spills as soon as they occur.

### Bathroom

- Have grab bars installed next to the toilet, and tub or shower.
- Secure loose towel racks, sink tops, and toilet seats.
- Use a rubber mat or other non-skid surface in tub or shower.
- Use a shower chair and raised toilet seat, if needed.
- Put medicine cabinet items within easy reach and ensure they are well marked.
- Install a phone in the bathroom (not near a water source).

### Bedroom

- Ensure there is space between the bed and wall.
- Avoid elevated / low beds and soft mattresses.
- Clear a path from the bed to the bathroom. Use hand rails, if needed.
- Place commonly used items in the closet between shoulder and knee level.
- A flashlight should be located near the bed.
- Position phones at heights accessible from floor level.
- Ensure lamps and switches are located near the bed to help see at night.



## Stairways

- Mark bottom step to be distinguished from the floor.
- Steps to have non-skid surfaces.
- Make sure railings are secure and visible.
- Stairs should have risers.
- Clear objects from stairs.
- Consider installing light switches at the top and bottom of the stairs.
- Consider refinishing or replacing worn treads or carpet.
- Clearly mark any steps that are narrow or have risers that are higher or lower than the others.

## Furniture

- Ensure feet are flat when sitting on the bed, toilet, or chair.
- Chairs should have armrests, backs, and have ease-to-rise capability.

## Walkways

- Repair uneven or cracked walkways.
- Remove clutter and furniture from walkways.
- Remove snow and ice, or use salt on icy walkways.

## Shoes

- Wear shoes that give good support.
- Avoid wearing slippers.

## Medicines

- Have your healthcare provider review your medicines.
- Make sure that all containers are clearly marked with the contents, doctor's instructions, expiration date, and patient's name.

## Pets

- Hold on to a sturdy object when placing pet food in a bowl on the floor or when bending over to pet the animal.
- Take special care when walking a dog.



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