



Home Safety

With proper healthcare, exercise and nutrition, more of us are living longer and are able to stay in our own homes much longer than before. As good as this sounds we still need to be very careful to keep our surroundings safe and prevent accidents from happening. There are many safety-related items available for seniors today but using good old common sense will also keep you safe and active while living independently.

Some of the simplest things you can do to keep safe include the following five items.

1. Preventing falls: Items such as throw rugs, electrical cords or pretty much anything that obstructs clear passage is a hazard. Not only can you trip over throw rugs, but they can also be very slippery. Furniture should also be arranged so that all passageways are clear for easy navigation.
2. Railings: stairways must have properly secured handrails. This is important even for ascending/descending just a couple of stair steps. Handrails should also be installed in bathtubs and showers.
3. Smoke & carbon monoxide detectors must have good working batteries in them.
4. Well lighted areas: make sure any burnt out light bulbs are replaced as soon as possible. Ask for help if necessary.
5. Flashlights: in the event of a power failure, each room in your house should have a working flashlight that's easy to get to.



General Home Safety

- Working smoke detectors on each floor
- Fire extinguishers on each floor
- Have an emergency exit plan
- Phone in every room of the house. Post emergency numbers near phones.
- Each room must be well lit
- Remove throw rugs or runners
- All doors and windows should easily open
- Remove any cords that may cross passageways

Living Room



- Keep a table containing necessary items such as tissues, eyeglasses, etc next to chair where you normally sit
- Chair should be easy to get in and out – a chair lift may be an option
- A phone should be within easy reach of favorite chair

Bedroom

- Phone should be next to bed
- Bed height should allow for easy getting in and out of bed
- If standard bed is not suitable, an adjustable hospital bed may be necessary
- Bedside commodes should be placed close to bed
- Furniture with sharp edges or corners should be padded in case of falls

Bathroom

- The person should be able to enter/exit tub or shower easily
- Hand rails around the tub, shower enclosure and toilet
- Use a tub chair
- Use non-skid adhesive strips in tub/shower
- Bathmat should be the non-slip type

Kitchen

- All kitchen equipment and supplies including dishes, should be within easy reach
- Stove should have easy access controls
- Appliances must be in good working order
- All flammable items should be kept away from the stove
- Easy reach extender arms are recommended for hard-to-reach items – never climb on anything to reach these items

Stairways

- All stairways should have secure handrails
- Provide bright lighting
- Carpeting should be secure
- Add non-skid adhesive to steps without carpets

Source: <http://www.seniorsathome.org/homesafety.html>