

Sandcreek Medical's Basic Home Safety Ideas

Walkways

- Remove throw rugs whenever possible to avoid slipping.
- If you can't remove throw rugs, use rugs with non-skid backing to avoid slipping.
- Repair or replace torn carpeting to avoid tripping.
- Make the transition between types of flooring as even as possible.

Stairs

- Make sure handrails are well anchored on both sides of the stairway.
- Non-skid treads can be placed on wooden stairs to prevent slipping.
- Make sure carpeting on stairs is secure.

Furniture Layout

- Arrange furniture so that pathways are not cluttered.
- Chairs and tables need to be stable enough to support a person leaning on them.
- Chairs with arm rests and high backs provide more support when sitting and more leverage when standing.

Lighting

- Be sure that your lighting is ample to prevent falls and to assure that you can read medication labels and instructions easily.
- Light switches should be immediately accessible upon entering the room.
- Good lighting in hallways, stairs and bathrooms is especially important.

Medicines

- Keep medicines out of the reach of children. If you keep your medicines out, be sure to put them away when you have visitors.
- Dispose of expired medicines properly.

Bathtub

- Install skid-resistant strips or rubber mat.
- Use a bath seat if it is difficult to stand during a shower or get out of the tub.
- Install grab bars on the side of the tub or shower for balance.
- DO NOT use the soap dish or towel bars for balance.
- Adjust the water temperature to ensure that you do not get scalded.
- Use an elevated toilet seat if you need support getting on and off the toilet or you are not able to bend your hip normally after a surgery.
- Install grab bars around the toilet if you need more leverage to get off the toilet.
- Avoid locking bathroom doors or use locks that can be opened from both sides.

KITCHEN SAFETY

- Store frequently used items at waist level-use a reacher or grabber to avoid standing on a chair or footstool when items are not at eye level.

- Mark ON and OFF positions clearly on the dials on the stove.
- Use the front burners of the stove to avoid reaching over burners, but use the back burners if there are children in the home.
- Make sure pan/pot handles are not over other burners and not over the edge of the stove.
- Slide heavy pans across the stove instead of trying to lift them.
- Keep baking soda near the stove to extinguish small cooking fires and keep a fire extinguisher in the kitchen if possible.
- Make sure the sleeves of your clothing are not loose or dangling while cooking—they could easily catch fire.
- Tables with 4 legs are more stable than pedestal-type tables.

FIRE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

- Smoke Detectors are recommended in each bedroom, each hallway and in the kitchen.
- A Fire Extinguisher (ABC type) should be mounted or stored in a central and accessible area.
- DO NOT smoke in bed or while watching TV if you are prone to fall asleep.
- Have an evacuation plan.
 - Someone who is bed bound will need to be placed in a wheelchair and removed or placed on a blanket and dragged away from danger.
 - Keep a hospital bed placed in the home close to an exit.
 - Plan how to get someone who is ill out of an apartment that is not on the first floor.
- Keep space heaters away from furniture, cords, curtains, or items that may ignite.
- Make sure if you use a fireplace it has a screen or doors.
- Keep oxygen from heat and open flame sources. Oxygen make fires burn rapidly.
- All people involved in patient care under stand how to call 911 for emergencies.

ELECTRICAL SAFETY

- Keep appliances away from water. Electrical appliances dropped into water can cause electrocution.
- Use only appliances in good working order.
- Inspect electrical cords.
- Use grounded plugs or 3-prong adapters for medical equipment.
- Proper use of extension cords is important to keep them from becoming a tripping hazard.
- Proper use of multi-plug outlets is important to keep from overloading electrical circuits.