

Home Safety for Fall Prevention

Six out of every 10 falls happen at home, where we spend the most time and tend to move around without thinking about our safety. This is a good time to review your own home for safety and reduce risk of falls.

Home Safety Checklist

In Stairways, Hallways, and Pathways

- Have handrails on both sides of the stairs and make sure they are tightly-fastened.
- Hold the handrails when you use the stairs, going up or down. If you must carry something while you are on the stairs, hold it in one hand, and use the handrail with the other.
- Do not let what you are carrying block your view of the steps.
- Make sure there is good lighting with light switches at the top and bottom of stairs and on each end of a long hall. Remember to use the lights!
- Keep walk areas tidy. Do not leave books, papers, clothes, and shoes on the floor or stairs.
- Check that all carpets are fixed firmly to the floor so they will not slip. Put no-slip strips on tile and wooden floors. You can buy these strips at the hardware store.
- Remove throw rugs or small area rugs.

In Bathrooms and Powder Rooms

- Utilize grab bars near toilets and on both the inside and outside of your tub and shower.
- Place non-skid mats, strips, or carpet on all surfaces that may get wet.
- Remember to turn on night lights.

In Bedrooms

- Put nightlights and light switches close to your bed.
- Keep a flashlight by your bed in case the power is out and you need to get up.
- Keep your telephone near your bed.

In Other Living Areas

- Keep electric cords and telephone wires near walls and away from walking paths.
- Secure all carpets and large area rugs firmly to the floor.
- Arrange your furniture (especially low coffee tables) and other objects so they are not in your way when you walk.
- Do not walk on newly washed floors—they are slippery.
- Keep items you use often within easy reach.
- Do not stand on a chair or table to reach something that is too high—use a “reach stick” instead or ask for help.
- If you use a step stool, make sure it is steady, has a top handrail, and someone stands next to you.
- Know where your pet is whenever you are standing or walking.
- Keep you cell phone or cordless phones charged and carry them with you.
- Keep emergency numbers in large print near each telephone.

References and Resources

Online Resources for Virtual Home Safety Recommendations

www.lifeline.ca/en/resources/reducing-falls-risk-home/

Online Home Safety Checklist

https://assets.aarp.org/external_sites/caregiving/checklists/checklist_homeSafety.html

www.nia.nih.gov/health/fall-proofing-your-home