

Home Safety Checklist

As we age, the most common cause of injury in our own home is falling. If you have a senior loved one living at home, follow this simple checklist for a few home safety pointers. Check all rooms, stairs, and hallways for the following:

1. Papers, shoes, books and other objects can be dangerous tripping hazards.
2. Handrails should be installed on both sides of the stairs. Fix any loose handrails or install new ones. Be sure to have railings run the full length of the stairs.
3. Is the house well lit? Any dark or dim areas within your home can ultimately lead to falling. Be sure to have light switches that are easy to access in all rooms and at the top and bottom of stairs.
4. Create clear pathways: When you walk through a room, do you have to walk around furniture? Minimize the amount of furniture in rooms and arrange appropriately to create clear pathways.
5. Avoid storing items on high shelves: Keep things that are used often on the lower shelves. If a step stool is needed ensure that it is sturdy.
6. Beds should be easy to get into and out of: A bed that is too high can result in falling when getting up.
7. Install handles and non-slip mats in bathrooms. Tubs, showers and floors can be slippery. Support may be needed when getting in and out of the tub/shower or up from the toilet.

Other Home Safety Tips:

1. Keep a phone in each room with emergency numbers in large print near each phone.
2. Consider wearing an alarm device that will bring help in case you can't get to the phone.
3. Keep a flashlight handy in all rooms in case the power goes out.
4. Understand the medication you are taking and the side effects that may develop. Some medications can make you sleepy or dizzy and increase the chance of injury.
5. Exercise regularly: Exercise makes you stronger and improves your balance and coordination which can make navigating through your home easier.
6. Have your vision checked at least once a year by an eye doctor. Poor vision can increase your risk of injury in your home.