

Preventing falls at home

This handout is a guide to help you reduce your risk of having a fall at home. Falls can't always be prevented but ensuring that the home is a safe place can help reduce the risk.

Safety in the bedroom

- Install night lights.
- Arrange furniture to make a clear path around the room.
Ensure that blankets and covers are tucked in
- Avoid raised or unsecured rugs that you could slip or trip on.
- If you live with other people, put a baby monitor in the bedroom so you can be heard by people in other rooms.
- Place a bell to call for assistance when needed.

Safety in the bathroom

- Install night lights.
- Have a bell handy to call for assistance
- Install grab bars in the shower and next to the toilet.
- Place non-slip mats in the shower and on bathroom floors.
- Install a raised toilet seat. This is a seat that fits over the toilet and makes it easier to stand up.
- Install a shower where you can adjust the height so you can sit down.
- Clean up spills immediately.

Safety in the home

- Install night lights.
- Keep your home tidy.
- Install handrails in the hallways, entrances and on both sides of stairs.
- Clear paths around furniture and in hallways.
- Ensure rooms and hallways are well lit.



- Install a ramp on entrances and stairs.
- Remove mats and rugs from floors which may cause trip hazards.
- Keep a fully charged cordless phone within reach.
- Install a medical alert system.
- Ensure smoke detectors and fire alarms are working.
- Put emergency numbers in an accessible place.
- Pets cause a significant number of falls and extra care needs to be taken if you have them.
- Make uneven floors level.
- Secure long cords and place them out of the way.

Equipment safety

- Do not wear poor fitting, loose or high-heel shoes.
- Do not walk around in socks because they are slippery.
- If you use a walker or cane, make sure there is space in the hallways and rooms to move.
- If you use a wheelchair and are at risk of falling, use a lap tray (available from medical supply shops).
- Consider a bedpan by your bed to minimise trips to the bathroom at night.

Additional safety tips

- Have your vision checked. Poor eyesight, the wrong glasses prescription, glaucoma and cataracts can affect safety.
- Have your doctor review your medications. Some medications can affect balance and/or cause drowsiness or dizziness.
- Consider having an occupational therapist assess your home, as they may be able to suggest changes to help prevent falls. Your GP can refer you.

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