



## Senior Home Safety

Seniors and the elderly are notorious for not asking for help – usually due to fear of being a burden to their families or fear of losing independence. Therefore, it is very important that Caregivers, adult children or other family members and friends look for signs that may indicate that assistance is needed.

When it comes to elderly home safety tips, there are three mindsets that seniors have about making their homes safer as they age:

- They do not like to admit they are getting older so they avoid making changes, or
- They recognize that they need help, but do not know where to start to look for it, or
- They worry about costs for making changes so they avoid it altogether.

Use this checklist to conduct an objective review of the conditions of the home and determine what needs to be done to make it safe. Consider asking another family member or friend to assist you with this so he or she can take notes while you conduct the examination:

- The home is free of clutter - Eliminate as much clutter as possible to reduce the chance of falling. Clutter is one of the main causes of falls in the home.
- Items that are frequently used are easily within reach without climbing or bending
- Seniors who take medications should always use pill organizers. This will help to ensure they are taking the right medication at the right time.
- Furniture is firm and stable and arranged to allow seniors and elderly room to walk around easily and comfortably.
- Rug and carpet safety – install non-slip rugs, no torn or loose pieces of carpeting, and all rugs and mats are non-slip and secure.
- All rooms are well-lit, with nightlights in heavily trafficked areas - this helps seniors navigate through the house in the dark, use extra lighting to increase visibility and telephones that have large buttons and light up in a dark room.
- Use task lighting, such as desk lamps, to make everyday activities simpler for seniors.
- Beds are adjusted to the appropriate height for seniors to get in and out.



## Senior Home Safety Checklist

- Safety equipment has been acquired for the bathroom to prevent slipping.
- Devices to assist with safe mobility have been installed, such as lifts or ramps, for those who struggle to get around
- Hand rails on stairways are sturdy, and others have been installed in hallways and bathrooms to help with balance.
- Make stairways safer by placing a piece of brightly colored tape along the edges of each stair.
- Position televisions so that the sun does not shine directly on the screen.
- Create a safety system – this could simply be a scheduled phone call to check on the individual. It could also be an installed monitoring system.
- Make sure emergency items are available, including medical cards, first-aid kits, and extra batteries, anything that would be needed in an emergency situation.
- Enforce fire prevention – do this by checking outlets, using timers and whistling tea kettles and discouraging the use of any candles.
- Create a communications center of important information that is needed during an emergency, such as medications, phone numbers of family members and the names of doctors. These lists should be kept near a phone or posted to the side of the refrigerator.
- Paint door frames a contrasting color from that of the walls so they stand out.