

Home Safety



Advice for seniors

As adults age, they are at increased risk of being injured at home. Some of the most common injuries result from falls and fires. One in every three adults age 65 and older will fall every year, making this accident the leading cause of both fatal and nonfatal injuries among older adults, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. And according to the U.S. Fire Administration, people are twice as likely to be killed or injured by fire at age 65 compared to the general population, and at age 85 they're more than four times as likely to be killed or injured by fire than the general population.

By taking simple steps to improve safety at home, many of these accidents and their resulting injuries can be avoided.

Fall prevention

- Exercise. Regular physical activity can prevent leg muscles from becoming weak and can help improve strength and balance.
- Have regular eye exams.
- Know your medications. Some can have side effects such as drowsiness or dizziness. If you have doubts, talk with your doctor or pharmacist.
- Fall-proof your home.
 - ❑ Clear walkways, stairs and all high-traffic areas of things you can trip over, such as books, shoes, electrical cords and low furniture.
 - ❑ Be sure staircases are well-lit and have handrail.
 - ❑ Improve your home's overall lighting, including nightlights in your bedroom, bathroom, and hallways.
 - ❑ Remove throw rugs.
 - ❑ Install grab bars inside and outside of your shower/bathtub and beside your toilet.
 - ❑ Store items you use often within easy reach.
 - ❑ wear sturdy shoes with nonskid soles.
 - ❑ Don't rush when getting out of chairs or your bed. Take a moment to get balanced before beginning to walk.

- ❑ Carry a cellular telephone in your pocket or be sure a cordless phone is located low enough that it can be reached if you fall and cannot stand.

If you fall

- Stay calm. Take a moment and decide whether you are hurt.
- Scoot, slide or crawl to the closest chair or couch and try to get up.
- If you can't get up, call out for help.
- If you are alone, scoot, slide or crawl to the telephone and call 911 or a trusted friend/family member for help.

Fire safety

- Smokers should only smoke outside. If you must smoke indoors, use deep, stable ashtrays. Never smoke in bed or near oxygen canisters.
- Be sure space heaters are at least three feet from anything flammable.
- Do not leave cooking food unattended or wear loose clothing while cooking.
- If your clothing catches fire, remember to stop, drop and roll.
- Be sure every floor of your house has at least one smoke alarm and one carbon monoxide detector. Test them monthly and change the batteries every year on your birthday.
- Plan multiple escape routes out of every room.
- Make sure all windows and doors in your home open easily.
- If possible, sleep in a room on the ground floor of your home. This will make escape easier.
- keep a telephone and emergency number nearby.
- Do not overload electrical outlets or cover electrical cords with rugs.

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More home safety tips

- Make sure your home's front and back doors have strong deadbolt locks.
- Post emergency phone number and the home's address beside each telephone in the home.
- Be sure the home's water heater thermostat is set at 120° F to avoid accidental scalding.
- Place a telephone and lamp or flashlight within easy reach of your bed.

Source: www.cdc.gov, www.usfa.fema.gov, nihseniorhealth.gov, www.nia.nih.gov and www.nlm.nih.gov

How our home care team can help

Benefits we deliver to hospitals

- Utilize outside resources to improve outcomes and control cost
- Reduce readmissions
- Reduce length of stay
- Reduce urgent/emergent care

Benefits we deliver to physicians

- Updated clinical assessment data
- Better case management to reduce calls
- Streamlined plan of care
- Improved physician follow-up
- Clinical outcomes feedback
- Early detection/intervention for better disease management

Benefits we deliver to patient/family/caregivers

- Improve quality of life
- Fewer emergency room visits
- Maximize activity tolerance
- Fewer hospital admissions
- Educate on early warning signs/symptoms

Home health service may include but are not limited to:

- Home safety and emergency education
- Home safety evaluation
- Prevention education
- Medication education and management
- Observation and assessment
- Wellness education
- Exercise instruction
- Management and evaluation of patient care plan
- Patient and family education of disease process
- Pain management
- Nutritional support
- Restorative therapy (physical, occupational, speech)
- Social work services



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