



Tips to Age-in-Place Safely

Lighting

- Place bed side lamps within an arm's reach.
- Add extra lights from the bathroom to the bedroom, such as battery powered or night lights in dark hallways or corners.

Flooring

- Use double sided tape or grip tape to secure any rugs to the floor and prevent tripping hazards.

Furniture

- “Three feet from heat.” Furniture, curtains, dish towels and anything that could catch fire should be at least three feet from any type of heat source.
- Use chairs with armrests when possible for extra support.
- Limit use of low-back chairs for better support.
- Arrange furniture to allow for larger pathways throughout your home.
- Limit paper, books, towels, shoes, magazines, boxes, blankets, or other objects on the floor to prevent tripping.
- Do not use a step stool, ask a family member or friend to help you reach items placed high.
- Place an entrance station next to your front door. If you are carrying items such as groceries inside; a table, planter or bench used to sit items on will help you safely open the door.

Kitchen

- Try not to clean floors with high gloss polish or wax. This can help prevent a fall.
- Stay in the kitchen when boiling water, grilling, frying, or broiling.

Bathroom

- Properly label all medications to ensure the correct dosage.
- Use a non-slip bathmat on your tub/shower floor and a secure rug to step out onto. Avoid using towel bars for balance.

Stairs

- Remove all papers, books, shoes or other objects from the stairs to prevent falls.
- If there is only a light switch at the top or bottom of the stairwell, consider adding battery powered or outlet night lights along the steps.
- Make sure handrails are present and securely attached; both inside the home and at the entrance/ exit.

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Fire

- If you use space heaters, place them on a level, hard, nonflammable surface. Keep at least three feet away from bedding, drapes, furniture and other flammable materials. Do not use when sleeping or close to any sleeping person.
- Know your escape route from each room in your home in case of fire. Consider installing escape ladders.
- In the event of a fire, get out of the house. It is not worth your safety to try and put out a fire. If you do choose to keep a fire extinguisher, make sure it is an ABC type extinguisher.
- Install a smoke alarm and CO alarm close to all sleeping areas and on every level of your home. Consider an alarm with a strobe light if you are hard of hearing. Test twice a year; at daylight savings time. **Never ignore a carbon monoxide alarm, get fresh air immediately.**

Preventing Falls

- **Be mindful of medications:** 80% of falls are from medicines, or combinations of medicines, that have side effects like dizziness or drowsiness. Have only one medication provider, a doctor or pharmacist, review all your medications to help reduce the chance of risky side effects.
- **Get some exercise:** Lack of exercise weakens legs, which increases the chance of falling. Exercise programs like Tai Chi increases strength and improves balance, making falls less likely for aging adults.
- **Keep your vision sharp:** Poor vision makes it harder to get around safely. To help make sure you're seeing clearly, have your eyes checked every year and wear glasses or contact lenses with the right prescription strength.
- **Remove hazards at home:** About half of all falls happen at home. A home safety check helps identify fall hazards, like clutter and poor lighting that should be removed or changed.
- **Avoid rushing** to answer the phone; consider a portable phone or make sure you have multiple phones within easy reach (living room, bedroom and kitchen).
- **Wear proper footwear** such as sneakers or a solid slipper with non-slip soles and avoid wearing socks on tile/wood floors.
- **Only do tasks that place yourself in danger when guests are over.** An example would be showering, walking up attic stairs, starting a fire in the fireplace.