



Preventing Falls

Tips for a Safe Home

Preventing Falls

As we age we are more likely to suffer a fall. Most falls occur in the home and can be prevented. We hope that the following tips will help you prevent falls and enjoy living safely in your home.



Rugs and Runners

People often slip and fall on small rugs and runners. Small rugs and runners should be slip-resistant so you will not fall.



You can make them slip-resistant by placing a rubber pad underneath the rug or placing double-sided tape on the bottom of the rug.

Lighting

Make sure your home is well-lit. In order to see better, use the maximum wattage bulb allowed for light fixtures. Never exceed the recommended wattage for a light fixture.



Use nightlights or tap lights in bathrooms and near bedroom doorways to help you see at night.

Make sure lights and switches are within reach of your bed and near the door of each room.



Medicines

- Be extra careful when you are taking medicine.
- Take medicines only as directed on the label container.
- Some medicine may make you sleepy. Have someone with you to help you during these times.
- Never take medicines prescribed for someone else.
- Medicines that you buy over the counter may cause problems with medicine prescribed by your doctor.
- Dispose of medicines you no longer take.



Ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist for help.

Walking Around

- Make sure that the pathways in your home are clear.
- Keep items such as books or stacks of paper out of your regular walking paths.

For your safety, do not use staples or nails to secure cords.



- Keep lamp, extension and telephone cords out of pathways.
- To keep cords out of your path, you can secure them with tape.
- Keep stairs clear of all items.
- Move items such as footstools, small tables and sharp edged furniture out of your regular walking path.

Stairs

- A fall down the stairs can be dangerous. Take time to make sure that your steps and stairs are clear of all items.
- Place handrails on both sides of the stairway. Use handrails when walking up or down steps.



If you cannot install handrails you can:

- Paint the edges of your steps a bright color such as yellow, orange, or red.
- Use bright colored tape on the edge of your steps. Make sure that the tape you use is made to help you see.
- Make sure stairs are well-lit.

Bathrooms

A bath or shower bench may be helpful while you are bathing.



Use handrails (grab bars).



Use rubber mats or slip-resistant strips in your bathtubs and showers.

Other Tips

Keep emergency numbers near all phones.



Have working flashlights and check the batteries. Keep flashlights in the kitchen, bedroom, and garage.

Have regular eye checks.

Keep your muscles strong by taking walks or exercising with friends.

Get up slowly after sitting or lying down.



Wear flat comfortable shoes with a firm rubber or non-slip sole. Make sure bedroom slippers have rubber on the bottoms.



Use a cane, walker, or wheelchair if you are unsteady on your feet.



Learn More About Home Safety

You can learn more about preventing falls, home safety and DHEC Home Health Services by contacting us at your local county public health department. We will answer your questions and tell you of which services are available in your county.



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