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## Fall prevention checklist for your home

### FALL PREVENTION, WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

Falling, or near falls are unfortunately a common experience and can lead to life altering, painful and stressful experiences.

Do your best to live a healthy and active lifestyle. With regular exercise and healthy eating, you can strengthen your muscles and improve your balance.

Medication: be sure to strictly follow the recommended dosage instructions. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about your medication if you are concerned that your medication is negatively affecting your balance.

When we experience reduced mobility and poor balance it is good to speak with a specialist. This may be social worker, occupational therapist, optometrist, physiotherapist, podiatrist, your doctor or other qualified health professionals.

They can assist you with accessing supports, treatments and various aids and assistive technology, which could reduce the risks of falling.

### FLOORS

- Walkways are clear of furniture and other obstacles that can be tripped over, such as shoes, magazines, and boxes.
- Loose mats and rugs have been Removed or replaced with non-slip rugs
- Cords & wires are taped down or folded away or against the wall

### STAIRS AND STEPS

- Loose or uneven steps and carpet have been fixed and clear of items such as shoes, magazines & boxes
- There are safe and secure handrails on both sides of stairs
- There is good lighting in stairway with light switches at the top and bottom
- Nonslip adhesive rubber tread is on the steps

This is general information only

For specific advice contact an appropriate health professional for a personal assessment.

## **BEDROOM**

- Bedside table lights are available and easily accessible.
- Torches are available in the event of a power failure.
- There are plug in night lights in bedrooms and hallways
- There is a phone in an accessible location, on the bedside table or on the floor, in case of falls

## **BATHROOM**

- There are non-slip flooring or mats.
- There are at least two grab rails in the bath/ shower and toilet area.
- Consider purchasing a shower chair and handheld shower.
- Add night lights along the hall or path to the bathroom
- Remove soap build-up from all areas of your bathroom as this can be slippery
- Step in and out of shower or bath is ramped and/or grab rails installed.

## **KITCHEN**

- Place items within easy reach, particularly heavy and frequently used items
- If you need to use a step ladder, make sure it has a handle at the top – never use a chair as a stepping stool

## **OUTDOOR AREAS**

- Ensure that outdoor areas are clear leaves or branches that may obstruct your walkways
- Repair any holes or uneven surfaces in paths and walkways
- Fix loose stones, loose decking, or paving in outdoor areas, such as stairs or patios
- Ensure there are no trip hazards between the kitchen and outdoor entertaining areas

## **OTHER**

- Have an emergency numbers list, in large print, near each phone.
- Use an appropriate walker or cane if your balance is unstable.
- Consider a wearable medical alert device in case of an emergency, especially when you are alone.
- There is a phone near the floor, in common areas, in case you fall and cannot get up
- Exercise to improve balance, strength and coordination
- Wear comfortable and supportive shoes
- Wear shoes with non-slip soles (thongs not ideal)

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