

## Falls prevention tips and hints around the home

60% of falls happen in and around the home, here are some steps you can take to make your surroundings safer.

### General

- Don't rush.
- Get up slowly when rising from a chair.
- Wear safe shoes, not slippers.
- Avoid wearing clothes that are too long and loose and can catch on things.
- Avoid heavily patterned floor coverings as they can make it hard to see small obstacles or the edges of steps, because they 'blend in'.
- Make obstacles or hazards stand out. Highlight the edges of steps and changes in floor level with contrasting coloured tape or paint so they are easily seen.
- Remove clutter.
- Remove mats or rugs or make sure they have either non-slip backing or are secured with double sided tape. Get rid of mats that curl or fold over easily.
- Remove or repair torn or loose carpet.
- Tuck electric cords under furniture or around skirting boards.

### Lighting

- Turn the lights on before you walk around.
- Increase the amount of light in frequently used areas.
- Ensure steps or stairs are well lit.
- Ensure the gate and path is well lit at night.
- At night, leave lights on in the passageway and other places you might walk.
- Light switches should be easy to reach. Two-way light switches are helpful on stairs and in corridors or rooms where there is more than one entry.
- Use curtains or blinds in your windows to decrease daytime glare.

### Chairs

- Avoid chairs with wheels, feet should reach the floor when sitting.
- Do not use chairs to climb onto to reach something. Instead, keep the item in a place that is easier to reach or ask someone else to reach it for you.

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### Bedroom

- Make sure quilts, bedspreads and curtains do not fall across the floor.
- Make sure you can get on and off your bed easily.
- Remove clothes and clutter from the floor to reduce tripping hazards.

### Bathroom

- Use non-slip mats in wet areas.
- Use a hand-rail in the bathroom and toilet.
- Avoid talcum powder on tiles, vinyl or wooden floors.
- Make sure soap and shampoo are easy to reach without bending.

### Kitchen

- Make sure frequently used items are easily reached.
- Pick up dropped food and mop up spills as soon as they happen.

### Outside

- Always wear safe shoes.
- Avoid slip-ons, thongs, slippers, slippery or loose-fitting shoes.
- Wear a hat and sunglasses to reduce glare.
- Remove anything that throws shadows across paths.
- Check where your pet is before you move. Dogs and cats like to be close.
- Keep paths clear of moss, slime and fallen leaves.
- Check paths for cracks or uneven areas.
- Consider installing rails for balance and support.
- Don't leave things lying around the garden – roll up the hose.
- Choose outdoor mats with sloping edges.
- If you use a walking aid, glasses or hearing aid, always remember to take them with you.
- Pay attention to your surroundings.

Think about different and safer ways of doing things and avoid anything that involves you getting up higher than floor level.

Know your limitations and don't be too proud to ask for help.