

**Home Safety Checklist**

Entry to the Home

* Is there good lighting in the driveway, garage, walkways, at all entrance doors, near the trash area, other areas of the yard that are used after dark?

Driveway

* Is the driveway smooth and evenly paved?
* Is the driveway very steep and do some adaptations need to be made?

Walkways

* Are walkways smooth and level, without cracks, gaps or tripping hazards?
* Do they have handrails?
* Are trees, shrubs, bushes and grass trimmed back or removed so they do not create a tripping hazard?

Steps to Doors

* Are the steps even, sturdy, level and in good condition?
* Are there easy to use handrails on both sides?
* If there are small single steps, can they be mini-ramped?

Entry Landings

* Remove all potential tripping hazards such as flower pots or other decorations.
* Be sure any doormat has a nonskid backing and no upturned corners.

Exterior Doors

* Are locks in good condition and easy to use?
* Do the doors open without sticking? Consider a lever handle instead of a doorknob for ease of use.
* For sliding glass doors, apply decals at eye level so that someone with poor eyesight does not bump into the glass.

Patios or Decks

* Is the surface level, smoothly surfaced and in good condition?
* Have any tripping hazards been removed?

Inside the home

* Remove throw rugs because they are potential tripping hazards.
* Clear pathways through halls, doors and into rooms.
* Clear all cords and wires out of pathways.
* Ensure there is good lighting in each room and that light switches are near room entrances.
* If walkers or wheelchairs will be used, are entry ways, halls and doorways wide enough?
* Look at all thresholds to be sure they are all less than 1 inch high. If not, a mini-ramp may be needed.
* Are any carpets, floor runners and tiles in good condition – not frayed, chipped or torn? Are vinyl or wood floors slippery?
* Are curtains, blinds or shades easy to open?
* Do windows open easily?
* Is there at least one comfortable chair people can get in and out of safely?

Bathrooms

* Is the sink and faucets easy to reach (for a standing person or a wheelchair)?
* Are mirrors at appropriate height?
* Are faucets easy to turn (again, lever-type handles might work better for some people)?
* If necessary, is an antiscald device installed?

Bathtub or Shower

* Are there sturdy grab bars in the tub or shower?
* Is there a nonskid bathmat in the tub or shower?
* Is there a handheld shower head?
* If needed, is there a tub or shower seat?

Toilet

* Are there sturdy grab bars at the toilet?
* Is the toilet seat in good condition and securely fastened?
* Is the height of the toilet too low or too high? Raised toilet seats and seats with handles or grab bars can be purchased at large retailers or drug stores.

Kitchen

* Is the floor surface smooth and even but not slippery?
* Is the sink at a good height and faucets easy to reach?
* On the stove, are burners and control knobs clearly labeled and easy to use?
* Is there a close place to rest hot cooking dishes or pans coming out of the oven?
* Is the microwave easy to reach, read and operate?

Bedroom

* Is the room well lit upon entering?
* Is there a clear path into the room and to the bed?
* Are cords, wires and throw rugs off the floor?
* Is there a light within easy reach of the bed?
* Is there support for getting into and out of the bed, if needed?
* Is there a place to sit and get dressed, if needed?
* Can dresser drawers be opened easily?

General Home Safety

* Are smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms installed and working properly?
* Is a telephone easily accessible and are emergency numbers nearby or pre-programmed into phone?

Special Sleeping Arrangements

* In some cases, the patient cannot come home and stay in their bedroom for example, if the bedroom is upstairs and they cannot navigate stairs or are not very mobile. A bed may need to be set up in the living room, dining room or other area on the ground floor. A family member or caregiver may also need to be available to help provide assistance with toileting, feeding, bathing, dressing, etc.
* If a family member or caregiver sleeps in another room, use a baby monitor to call for assistance.

Other Tips

* Consider placing a portable toilet (commode) near the bed or place in multiple locations in the home.
* Purchase walkers, commodes, baby monitors, bath chairs or other devices at garage sales or resale shops. Second-hand equipment may be much cheaper than items purchased at a medical supply store. **Be sure to have your therapist or another member of the rehab team check any self-care and mobility equipment for safety purposes.**

\*Adapted from The Specialty Practice of Rehabilitation Nursing: A Core Curriculum, 6th edition, Cynthia S. Jacelon, PhD RN-BC CRRN FAAN, editor