

REDUCE YOUR FALL RISK

HOME SAFETY CHECKLIST

60% of falls happen in the home. Run through this list to identify risk factors and learn some safety tips to reduce the likelihood of falls in your home.

Flooring safety and trip hazards

- Remove all loose mats and rugs
- If mats are used, ensure they are firmly secured to the floor or walls – use non-slip backing tape where needed
- Always wipe up spills as soon as they occur. Some floor surfaces are extra slippery when wet
- Ensure floors are clutter-free
- Coil or tape wires and cables against the wall and safely away from walkways

Lighting to increase visibility to prevent falls

- Ensure lights are just bright enough for you to see clearly, but not too bright to cause glare or eye strain
- Ensure light switches are easy to reach and near each doorway
- Provide adequate lighting, particularly at night. An inexpensive option is to use plug-in nightlights, or you can consider installing motion sensor lights
- Allow time for your eyes to adjust when walking from light to dark areas and vice versa
- Ensure there is good lighting where you keep your medicines

Bathrooms and toilet accessibility and safety

- Ensure that your soap, shampoo and towel are within easy reach
- Be cautious at all times when in the bathroom as wet areas are more likely to be slippery and hazardous

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- Use non-slip mats in the bathroom or install slip-resistant flooring
- Sit on a stable shower chair with back support to make shower time safer
- Install grab bars and/or use a raised toilet seat if you have difficulty getting on and off the toilet

Kitchen safety and accident prevention

- Organise your kitchen so that frequently used items are easy to find and access without the need to climb, bend or reach
- Ensure there is good lighting over table tops and other work areas
- Clean up spills as soon as they occur
- Ensure your kitchen is clutter-free
- Use a broad based, sturdy and secure ladder if it is absolutely necessary to reach high places. Never use plastic stools or chairs

Living room organisation for accessibility and safety

- Opt for solid chairs of correct height with solid armrests as these are easier to get up from. Ensure that you can place your feet flat on the ground when seated
- Avoid sitting on soft low sofas that make sitting and getting up difficult
- Place standing fans at the corners and not in the middle of a room or walkway
- Organise furniture so that you do not have to stretch or lean too far to open windows
- Place your telephone within easy reach; cordless telephones are ideal
- Ensure your doorbell is in working condition

Bedroom safety, lighting and accessibility

*Specially prepared by the
Changi General Hospital Fall Prevention Committee*

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- Check that you can easily switch on a light from your bed when you get up at night, otherwise, set up extra lights or lamps next to your bed
- Consider a touch lamp or a night lamp within reach of your bed at night
- Keep a telephone beside your bed
- Keep bedroom floors free of clutter
- Secure loose telephone and electrical cords against the wall do not cause tripping
- Ensure your eyeglasses are easy to reach if you need them when you get out of bed
- Check that beds are easy to get into and out of; use a firm mattress and ensure that the bed is of an appropriate height. You should be able to place your feet flat on the floor when sitting at the edge of the bed. Your knees should be at a comfortable 90° angle
- If you are having difficulty into or out of your bed, seek advice from an occupational therapist
- Ensure your bedspread is clear off the floor and is not a trip hazard
- Get out of bed slowly – sit for a short time before you stand up
- Have your walking aid handy in case you get up in the night

Clothing and footwear advice

- Wear shoes that have non-slip soles and rounded low, broad heels
- Avoid wearing only socks, slippers, shoes with slippery soles and high heels
- Check that clothing (pants, dresses and long skirts) end above the ankle to avoid tripping
- Sit down rather than stand when dressing