

# HOME SAFETY CHECKLIST

Up to 40 percent of older adults living in the community fall each year. About 85 percent of these falls occur in the home and many of them could have been prevented. To prevent falls and maximize independence, you may need to monitor your home for hazards and make adaptations. Inside you'll find a checklist identifying areas in the house where problems may occur if the appropriate safety measures aren't taken. Please take a moment to evaluate your living environment and ensure that your home is a safe home.

**Inside and outside your home, there are several factors to consider to help secure safety.**

Is your sidewalk, driveway and front walk clear of ice, snow and leaves to prevent slipping?

Yes  No

Are holes in your lawn or garden filled or marked?

Yes  No

Do steps outside the house have a handrail that is well secured and not slippery?

Yes  No

Is the outside of your house well lit?

Yes  No

Can you see the lock on your door for quick entry into the house?

Yes  No

**Upon entering the house, there are some general safety concerns that should be kept in mind.**

Is there a light switch or light accessible near the entrance to brighten the room so that you don't trip over objects in the dark?

Yes  No

Are all cords rolled up or secured to prevent your feet, canes or walkers from getting tangled up in them?

Yes  No

Are all rugs secured to the floor?

Yes  No

*(Note: Throw rugs should be removed.)*

Are all stairs well lit with switches at the top and bottom?

Yes  No

Do the stairs have treads securely fastened to help prevent slipping?

Yes  No

Are the stairs free of clutter?

Yes  No

Are the edges of your steps marked to identify where each step begins and ends?

Yes  No

*(Note: You can mark the edges of each step with a non-skid contrasting tape.)*

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## JUST FOR YOU

Do your shoes fit well?

Yes  No

*(Note: Sturdy, low-heeled, non-skid footwear with rubber soles are recommended. Crocheted slippers should not be worn because they are very slippery.)*

Are you active?

Yes  No

*(Note: Maintaining your strength, mobility and flexibility will reduce your chances of falling.)*

Do you get dizzy when sitting up?

Yes  No

*(Note: Rise from the chair or bed slowly and don't start walking until the dizziness goes away.)*

**Have you ever considered "Lifeline"?  
WMH's lifeline phone number is  
1-888-669-2273**

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## WHAT'S COOKIN'?

It is important to consider the following when evaluating your kitchen for possible safety hazards.

Are all appliances, dishes and utensils stored within reach?

Yes  No

Do you use a step stool with rubber ends to reach high-placed objects rather than standing on a chair that may be unstable?

Yes  No

Is your stove in good working condition?

Yes  No

Are the dials on your stove easy to read?

Yes  No

Do you have a gas stove?

Yes  No

If so, do you check the pilot light to make sure it's on and that there is no gas smell?

Yes  No

Do you have a fire extinguisher near the stove?

Yes  No

Do you have more than two electrical cords in one outlet?

Yes  No

*(Note: More than two electrical cords in one outlet can cause a circuit overload.)*

Is the stove area free from towels and other flammable materials?

Yes  No

When carrying the food from the kitchen to the table, is your pathway clear?

Yes  No

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## SPLISH SPLASH

The bathroom is one of the most common rooms in the house for a fall to occur.

Do you have a sturdy grab bar to hold on to while showering?

Yes  No

Does your bathtub have non-skid mats or strips?

Yes  No

If you have problems standing in the shower, have you considered a shower seat?

Yes  No

*(Note: There are several shower seats on the market from which to choose. Look for one that is sturdy and fits well in your tub.)*

Do you have problems getting on or off the toilet?

Yes  No

*(Note: If yes, consider a raised toilet seat or install a grab bar to give you more leverage to get up.)*

If you drop your soap in the tub, is it difficult to bend and pick it up?

Yes  No

*(Note: Solutions to this problem include using soap on a rope, a bath mitt with the soap inside, and an on-the-wall soap dispenser.)*

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## SWEET DREAMS

Upon entering the bedroom, you should consider the following:

Can you easily move around the furniture so that you don't trip or stub your toe?

Yes       No

Can you get in and out of bed easily?

Yes       No

*If no, perhaps you need to increase the firmness or height of your bed.*

Is the telephone within easy reach, so that you don't have to jump from bed to answer a ringing phone?

Yes       No

Is there a light switch by your bed ensuring that you won't have to walk through the room in the dark?

Yes       No

Are all necessities (medication, glasses, water, telephone numbers, slippers, etc.) within reach?

Yes       No

Are night-lights dispersed throughout the house to light the hallways and rooms?

Yes       No

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## LET SLEEPING DOGS LIE

It is fine to let your pets lie around the house, as long as you don't trip over them! At night, you may not be aware of where your pet is resting. Take precautions and use night-lights to light your way.

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## PHYSICAL MEDICINE AND REHABILITATION SERVICES (262) 928-2700

We care about your safety and well-being. Making your house safe is a benefit not only for you, but also for the people in your life that live with or visit you. Please feel free to call the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Services at Waukesha Memorial Hospital for further information and suggested reading material on home safety.

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