

HOME SAFETY CHECKLIST

This is a brief summary of the CDC *“Check for Safety-A home fall prevention checklist for older adults”* brochure, which is an evidenced based document. We have taken the major points and listed simple steps an individual can take to make their loved ones home fall prevention safe.

Floors and Pathways

Everyone has a favorite chair from which they watch TV, Read, Chat with family and friends, and sometimes even eat with the help of a side table or TV table. From this favorite location, it is essential to maintain clear pathways to the (1) bathroom, (2) kitchen, and (3) bedroom.

- Move or rearrange any furniture that prevents an easy straight pathway to the other locations.
- Remove any throw rugs or carpet pieces that can be tripped on. If they must be there, use double sided tape to hold them down so they cannot slip.
- Remove or reroute any wires or cords like telephone, lamp or extension cords that cross the pathways. (Coil or tape the cords down, or have an electrician install another wall outlet.)
- Remove all books, magazines, shoes, towels, blankets, boxes or other objects on the floor that are close to the pathways.

Stairs and Steps

- Remove any papers, boxes or objects from all stairs. Never allow objects on the stairs.
- Fix any loose or broken stairs or loose or torn carpet on the stairs.

- Fix any loose handrails, or install another handrail so that they exist on both sides of the stairs

General Lighting

- Buy and/or install nightlights so that when getting up for the restroom at night there is enough light. A simple table lamp next to the bed can also be used when you get up at night.
- Increase the wattage to make the house brighter since older eyes gather less light.
- Make sure all stairways have adequate lighting. For example just increase the wattage in the stairway light. You could also have an electrician install a light or an extra switch so that the lights in your stair areas can be turned on from the top or the bottom of the stairs.

Bathroom

- Put self-stick strips on the floor of the tub or shower.
- Install a grab bar in the tub or shower and next to the toilet.

Electronic Alert Device

- If your loved one lives alone, acquire a medic alert device and convince them it is for their safety and independence to wear and use. These devices save lives every day in Hawaii.

MAKE SURE YOU ALSO (1) have medications reviewed annually to make sure no drugs cause dizziness, (2) have vision checked annually, and (3) stay active by doing simple exercises like “tai chi” to help prevent falls.