

Home Safety Checklist

This checklist is designed to create a safer environment for you and your household. Removing hazards or other dangerous items can reduce hospital visits, prolong one's ability to remain in the home and minimize crisis. If you have concerns for your safety or are in need of home safety supplies, please contact Alzheimer's San Diego.

Throughout the Home

- Free walkways and stairs of clutter and cords. Secure throw rugs with sticky backing or remove entirely. Add handrails to assist with balance.
- Check all rooms, walkways, and stairs for adequate lighting. Use motion sensor lighting.
- Mark edges of steps/stairs with brightly colored tape so they are seen more easily.
- Have an extra set of house, car, and bedroom/bathroom door keys, in case they are misplaced.
- Having emergency phone numbers and your address beside all landlines. Label at least one person as "In Case of Emergency (ICE)" into the phone.
- Ensure that there are working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in all rooms.
- Store away poisonous or hazardous substances and cleaning products.
- Remove any other household items that could cause injury such as scissors, knives, power tools, and machinery. Avoid having these items out on display.
- Secure any guns and other weapons in a safe location or remove them from the home.
- Store medications in a secured area if supervision with taking medication is needed.
- Install no-step, no-trip thresholds at doorways.

Kitchen

- Have a fire extinguisher nearby and know how to use it.
- When the stove top is not in use, use a stove top cover to prevent unnecessary use. Use oven locks to prevent touching hot surfaces. Use appliances with auto shut off features.
- Post signs like "Don't touch – Very Hot!" for helpful reminders when things are hot or unsafe.
- Check the refrigerator and pantry weekly to prevent spoiled foods.
- Remove items like fake fruit or other décor that can be mistaken for edible foods.
- Keep vitamins and prescriptions in a secured area.

Bathroom

- Install grab bars near shower, bathtub, and toilet. Consider using a raised toilet seat.
- Use a non-skid bath mat or non-slip surface in bathtub or shower as well as for any bathmats.
- Lower the water heater temperature to 120 degrees to prevent burns or scalding.

- Use a shower chair or transfer bench to minimize the risk of falling or slipping.
- Install an adjustable-height or handheld showerhead.

Bedroom

- Have transfer devices or portable toilets in close proximity.
- Consider using risers to elevate the bed to make it easier to get in and out of.
- Place the phone and importance phone numbers near the bedside for emergencies.
- Secure electric blankets, portable heaters, and heating pads.

Being Alone

Individuals living with mild memory impairments can often live and be left alone safely. At some point it will become necessary to have someone with the person at all times in order to prevent injury or harm. Planning ahead and preventing injury can extend the person's independence. If you notice some of the changes listed, plan for more supervision, support, or a change in living situation.

It has become challenging to:

- Take medications successfully and safely
- Grocery shop, prepare meals, pay bills, maintain household cleanliness and home repairs
- Use the telephone, television, or other technology
- Remember the current phone number or home address
- Remember to extinguish cigarettes, turn off burners or oven, lock or secure the home
- Eat well-balanced meals and drink appropriate amounts of water
- Judge the appropriate temperature for getting dressing or using the thermostat

The person experiences:

- Feeling worried, anxious, isolated and lonely
- Paranoid thoughts, hallucinations, delusions, aggression or thoughts of suicide
- Being the victim of fraud, telemarketers, or a crime
- Becoming lost or is often disoriented
- Weight loss or gains and/or their pets have weight loss or gains

You are noticing:

- The person calls others constantly or the police are being called by the neighbors
- Items are missing around the home
- The person has mysterious bruises, scratches, or unusual marks
- The person gets locked out of the home frequently
- Personal care/hygiene is neglected, the person wears the same clothing all the time
- The vehicle has new dents or scratches

For more information on wandering prevention, please contact Alzheimer's San Diego.

Helpful videos on this topic: Family Caregiver Alliance

www.caregiver.org/fca-videos