

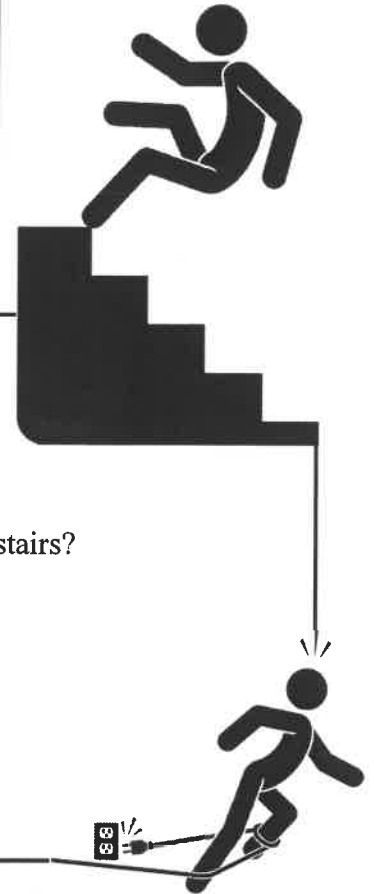
Don't let a FALL get you down!

WHY BE CONCERNED?

- One out of every three persons over the age of 65 falls each year.
- Two thirds of those who fall do so again within six months.
- Among people age 65 and older, falls are the leading cause of injury deaths and serious injuries.
- Half of all older adults hospitalized for hip fractures cannot return home or live independently after their injuries.

FALL RISK CHECKLIST

- Does your stairwell have secure handrails on both sides of the stairs?
- Does your hand wrap easily and completely around the handrail?
- Is the lighting in your stairwell adequate for you to clearly see the outline of the stairs?
- Are there light switches at both the top and bottom of your stairs?
- Are all the carpets in your home securely attached to the floor?
- Are stairs and walking space free of clutter?
- Are outside stairs lighted and walkways free from cracks, dips and holes?



IF YOU FALL

- If you do fall you need to be prepared to call for help.
- Keep a telephone along with emergency numbers on a very low table. It will make it easier for you to reach from the floor.
- Keep warm while you are waiting for help. Try to cover yourself with a blanket, a coat or even a rug if that is all you can reach.
- Even if you do not seek medical attention at the time of your fall you need to tell your physician that you did fall so they can determine why you fell. It could be related to a medication or a medical condition.

Most falls can be prevented. As you grow older, the consequences of a fall become much more serious. Broken bones often result and may lead to lifelong disability. Even when you fall and do not get hurt, the fear of falling again can limit the way you live your life.

PLEASE USE THIS FALL PREVENTION CHECKLIST AS A GUIDE TO HELP YOU MAKE YOUR HOME A SAFER PLACE TO TRAVEL! IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR WOULD LIKE A MORE DETAILED ASSESMENT OF THE SAFETY OF YOUR HOME, CONTACT OUR OFFICE AND WE WILL BE GLAD TO EVALUATE YOUR NEEDS AND MAKE SUGGESTIONS TO REDUCE YOUR RISKS.



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HOW TO BE PREPARED FOR A DISASTER

1. Understand What Could Happen

Look Around Where You Live. Emergencies can happen anywhere. Ask yourself what emergencies or disasters can occur in your area and how they could affect you and your family. Learn what warning methods your community uses such as television or radio announcements and find out about local disaster plans.



2. Create an Emergency / Disaster Plan

Meet with Your Family. Discuss the types of emergencies that are most likely to happen and what to do in each case. Determine where to meet in the event of an emergency such as an area right outside your home in the case of a fire or a place outside your neighborhood in the event you can't return home.

Plan for special needs such as medical equipment and evacuation of the mobility impaired. Don't wait for a disaster to strike before considering these needs. For oxygen patients, this includes always making sure you have enough backup to last until help arrives. Remember that emergency personnel will respond as soon as possible but this can still take some time.



3. The Preparedness Checklist

Keep a Current List of Emergency Numbers. This list should include police, fire, rescue, your physician(s), medical supplier, utility companies, family members and anyone else you may need to contact in the event of an emergency.

Also make sure you have working fire extinguishers and everyone in your home knows how to use them. Additional emergency supplies to have on hand include: a three to five day supply of water, non-perishable food and a can opener, a change of clothing and footwear, a blanket or sleeping bag, a basic first aid kit, working flashlight, battery powered radio, spare batteries, extra set of car keys, a credit card, cash or travelers checks, sanitation supplies and any special items for infant, elderly or disabled family members.



Additional information can be found on the web at www.redcross.org, www.fema.gov, www.nhc.noaa.gov, and individual state emergency management sites.