

# Home Safety

Creating a safe environment for your loved ones



*Don't Feel Guilty ∞  
You Can't Do It All!*



## Protecting The Vulnerable

Elderly, disabled, or homebound persons are especially vulnerable to common household accidents, or to emergency situations. Simple precautions can create a safer environment for your loved ones.

## Lighting

- Keep all areas of the home, including hallways and stairs, well-lit, but free from glare.
- Use night lights in the bedroom, hallways, kitchen and bathrooms.

## Tubs and Showers

- Set the hot water temperature at 115 degrees or below on the water heater to avoid scalding injuries.
- Use slip-resistant decals or non-skid mats in the tub or shower.
- Install grab bars in the bathtub and by the toilet; be sure the screws go directly into the wall studs, so they stay securely in place.

## Electrical

- Don't place cords under furniture or rug
- Replace frayed cord
- Don't overload extension cord
- Don't use multiple outlet adapters on electrical outlet
- Inspect electrical cords for fraying or cracking; be sure they are placed away from walking paths, but not under carpet or furniture, where they could present a fire hazard.
- Always turn off heating pads before an older person goes to sleep.

## Rugs, Runners, Mats, and Floors

- Secure loose rugs, runners and mats to the floor with double-sided adhesive or rubber matting.
- Tack down carpet edges.
- Repair, replace or remove torn, worn or frayed carpets.
- Make sure floors are not slick or slippery - do not use glossy floor polish.

## Telephone

- One phone should be close at hand in event of an accident and a person cannot stand or walk to the phone.
- Post emergency numbers near or on the phone with a sticker.
- At least one phone must be connected directly...cordless phones do not work during a power failure.
- Family members may want to consider carrying a pager (beeper) for immediate access if needed.

## Fire

- 1 smoke detector is recommended on each level of the home.
- Develop a plan to exit the home in case of fire.
- Keep pathways to all exits clear.
- Make sure a key is nearby dead bolt locked doors.
- Don't leave cooking items unattended.
- Never leave kerosene heaters, wood stoves or fireplaces unattended while in use.
- Be sure any window bars are releasable from inside the home.
- Keep the stove area in the kitchen free of towels, paper towels, napkins, curtains, etc. that might catch fire.
- Keep a fire extinguisher in the kitchen, and teach ever one of age to use it.
- Keep space heaters away from flammable materials, and be sure the room is well ventilated.

## Cupboards and Closets

- Most frequently used items should be placed on lower shelves.
- To reach high items, only use a sturdy step stool.
- Place heavy items flat on lower levels to avoid the possibility of falling items.

## Need more information?

National Safety Council  
[www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org)

International Association  
of Certified Home Inspectors  
[www.nachi.org/elderlysafety](http://www.nachi.org/elderlysafety)