

## Home Safety Recommendations

Throughout the home:

- Remove throw rugs
- Secure any loose carpeting
- Use non-skid wax floors
- Adjust lighting to reduce glare
- List emergency numbers on or near the phone
- Keep the phone in easy reach
- Consider using a telephone emergency alert system
- Light pathways to the bedroom and bathroom

In the kitchen:

- Avoid using shelves that are above easy reach
- Only use a footstool that has a handrail
- Assure easy access to commonly used dishes
- Use a long handled mop for cleanup of spills
- Cook food thoroughly, refrigerate all food including left overs promptly.
- Wash all utensils (especially cutting board) and hands with soap and water after contact with uncooked foods.

Stairs and hallways:

- Have handrails on all stairs, preferably on both sides.
- Make sure handrails are graspable and easily visible
- Place markers on the top and bottom of the handrail
- Keep stairs clear of all objects
- Make sure carpeting is securely fastened to the stairs
- In uncarpeted, apply a non-ski surface to stairs.

Bathroom:

- Use a rubber bathmat on nonslip appliqués
- Install a shower head extender (handheld)
- Use a shower chair with back and non-skid tips
- Install grab bars in shower, tub and alongside toilet
- Install a non-skid material bathtub
- Obtain raised seat and arms for toilet

#### Bedroom:

- Consider putting a bedrail on the bed
- Consider the need for a bedside commode or urinal
- Assure safe pathway to the bedroom
- Never sleep with a heating pad if it is turned on
- Keep a flashlight at the bedside
- Never sleep with an electric blanket turned on. Refer to manufacturer's instructions.

#### Outdoors:

- Remove objects from walkways
- Keep path free of snow and ice
- Install lights and handrails
- Check pathways for soft gravel or uneven surfaces

#### Fire/Burn prevention:

- Have an identified escape route
- Check or install smoke detectors on all floors
- Install carbon monoxide detectors near the bedroom
- Use screen for space heaters
- Access ability to cook safely
- Unplug small appliances when not in use
- Make sure heat controls are readable on stove
- Set your water heater at low or 100F
- Never smoke in bed or around oxygen equipment
- Keep a fire extinguisher in the kitchen
- Check for frayed electrical cords or overload outlets
- Electrical outlets and switches should not be warm or hot, and should not be covered.

#### Disposal Tips:

- Place all needles, syringes, lancets and other sharp objects in a hard-plastic or metal container with a screw-on tightly secured, puncture proof lid. A coffee can with a reinforced lid will do.
- DO NOT USE GLASS OR CLEAR PLASTIC CONTAINERS.
- Do not put sharp objects in any container that is to be recycled or returned to a store.
- Keep containers with sharp objects out of reach of children.
- Place all soiled bandages, disposable sheets and medical covers in a securely fastened plastic bag before putting them with other trash.

Infection Control for Client/Caregivers:

- Wash hands before and after all aspects of care.
- Wear gloves when:
  - Doing any dressing change or wound care, handling any body fluids, and/or changing wet or soiled bedding.
  - Giving mouth care
  - Providing perineal care.
- Place used disposable gloves, dressings or pads in a plastic bag and securely close before disposing in regular trash.
- Place any used needles, lancets or other sharp objects in a puncture-resistant container (hard plastic or metals with a secure lid)
- Use a 1:10 (1 part bleach to 10 parts water) bleach solution to clean items and surfaces soiled with blood or wound secretions.
- Use laundry bleach when washing soiled linen.

In the event of an emergency, call an ambulance or take to the emergency room for:

- Unconsciousness
- Severe breathing difficulty
- Chest pain that does not stop
- Severe fall with suspected injuries
- Excessive bleeding
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Call your nurse or physician for:

- Change in consciousness or unexplained behavior
- Temperature of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Inability to keep liquids down for 24 hours.
- Severe pain unrelieved by pain medications.
- Urinary difficulties
- No bowel movement for \_\_\_\_\_ days.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Call your physician for:

- Prescription refills
- Any significant changes in the patient's condition or a new symptom
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE:** These safety guidelines are not meant to be an inclusive list of possible safety hazards.