

# Home Safety Modification Assessment Tool

## **FLOORS: Check the floor in each room of your home.**

### **1) When you walk through a room, do you have to walk around any furniture?**

- Make sure you have a clear walking path. Ask someone to move any furniture that is in your path or walkway.

### **2) Do you have throw rugs on the floor?**

- Remove all rugs. Or, use double-sided tape or a non-slip backing so the rugs will not slip.

### **3) Are there papers, books, towels, shoes, magazines, boxes, blankets or other objects on the floor?**

- Pick up things that are on the floor. Always keep objects off the floor.

### **4) Do you have to walk over or around wires or cords (like lamp, telephone, cable or extension cords)?**

- Coil or tape all cords and wires next to the wall so you can't trip over them. If needed, have an electrician install another outlet.

## **STAIRS AND STEPS: Look at the stairs you use inside and outside your home.**

### **1) Are there papers, shoes, books, or other objects on the stairs?**

- Pick up things that are on the stairs. Always keep objects off the stairs.

### **2) Are some steps broken or uneven?**

- Repair loose or uneven steps.

### **3) Are you missing a light over the stairway?**

- Install an overhead light at the top and bottom of the stairs.

### **4) Do you have only one light switch for your stairs (only at the top or bottom of the stairs)?**

- Have an electrician put in a light switch at the top and bottom of the stairs. You can get light switches that glow.

### **5) Has the stairway light bulb burned out?**

- Have a friend or family member change the light bulb.

### **6) Is the carpet on the steps loose or torn?**

- Make sure the carpet is firmly attached to every step, or remove the carpet and attach non-slip rubber treads to the stairs.

**7) Are the handrails loose or broken? Is there a handrail on only one side of the stairs?**

- Fix loose handrails or put in new ones. Make sure handrails are on both sides of the stairs and are as long as the stairs.

**KITCHEN: Look at your kitchen and eating area.**

**1) Are the things that you use often on high shelves?**

- Move items in your cabinets. Keep things you use often on the lower shelves (about waist level).

**2) Is your step stool unsteady?**

- If you must use a step stool, get one with a bar to hold on to. Never use a chair as a step stool.

**BATHROOMS: Look at all of your bathrooms.**

**1) Is the tub or shower floor slippery?**

- Put a non-slip rubber mat or self-stick strips on the floor of the tub or shower.

**2) Do you need some support when you get in and out of the tub or up from the toilet?**

- Have a carpenter install grab bars inside the tub and next to the toilet.

**BEDROOMS: Look at all of your bedrooms.**

**1) Is the light near the bed difficult to reach?**

- Place a lamp close to the bed where it's easy to reach.

**2) Is the path from your bed to the bathroom dark?**

- Put in a nightlight so you can see where you're walking. Some nightlights go on by themselves after dark (sensored nightlights).

**OTHER THINGS YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT FALLS**

- Exercise regularly. Exercise makes you stronger and improves your balance and coordination.
- Have your doctor or pharmacist review ***all*** of your medications. Some medications can make you sleepy or dizzy.
- Have your vision checked at least once a year by an eye doctor. Poor vision can increase your risk of falling.
- Get up slowly after you sit or lie down.

- Wear shoes both inside and outside the house. Avoid going barefoot or wearing slippers.
- Improve the lighting in your home. Put in brighter light bulbs. Florescent bulbs are bright and cost less to use.
- It's safest to have uniform lighting in a room. Add lighting to dark areas. Hang lightweight curtains or shades to reduce glare.
- Paint a contrasting color on the edge of each step so you can see the stair better. For example, use light-colored paint on dark wood.

**OTHER SAFETY TIPS**

- Keep emergency numbers in large print near each phone.
- Put a phone near the floor in case you fall and can't get up.
- Think about wearing an emergency alert device that will bring help in case you fall and can't get up.

**IDENTIFIED PROBLEM AREAS:**

- Floors
- Stairs and steps
- Kitchen
- Bathrooms
- Bedrooms

**PROBLEM-SOLVING/GOAL SETTING:**

- 1) My goal is to resolve the identified problems in:
  - one week
  - one month
  - 3 months
  - other, \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) I received a list of community agencies that may have resources to assist me with improving the safety of my home environment.
- 3) I would like someone to contact me in one month for a follow-up visit.

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Signature

Date

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Fall Prevention Task Force Member

Date

*\*Adapted from the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*