Living Your Best Life

Home Safety

  



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**General Home Safety**

**Aging in Place**

Most Seniors express a desire to age at home, rather than enter a senior living facility. While staying in their home does have some advantages, efforts must be made to ensure that the home is a safe environment for our loved ones. Here are some recommendations for the general living space:

**Lighting is Essential**

Without plenty of lighting, the chance of injury increases. Accommodate your loved one’s reduction in eyesight by making sure that living spaces are brightly lit.

**Floors Must Be Clean and Free From Clutter**

Remove clutter and inspect floors for trip hazards, including throw rugs and electrical cords. Make sure that doorways and hallways are clear to walk through.

**Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors**

Inspect all alarms and detectors in the home and make sure that the devices work, and that they contain working batteries

**Avoid Overloaded Electrical Outlets**

If outlets appear to be overloaded, invest in surge protectors to ensure the safety of your loved one.

**In The Kitchen**

**Evaluate the Situation**

This is an area where most seniors need help at one time or another. Can they still be expected to shop? Is food preparation and cooking a safe scenario, or is it risky?

**Shopping and Food Storage**

Check in the refrigerator, and make sure that food is fresh and not outdated. If you find that the food is expired, or unhealthy, give some thought to alternatives. Can you have groceries delivered, or bring them to your senior? Is meal delivery an option? Give them options and make this decision together for best results.

**Kitchen Appliance Safety**

Are the appliances safe to operate, and are they within easy reach? Reaching and bending can lead to falls, so make sure items are easy to reach. Replace older appliances as necessary and consider eliminating those that are unsafe.

**Is Nutrition an Issue?**

Is your loved one eating a lot of take-out or fast food? Are they skipping meals or eating too many sweets? Have a discussion about meal planning, and see if they need help with planning, shopping, cooking, or scheduling meals. Nutritional needs must be met.

**In The Bathroom**

**Fall Risks Are a Major Concern**

Most falls happen in the bathroom, so it is especially important to install safety helpers in the bathroom. Let us look at the major trouble areas.

**Bathtubs**

Stepping in and out of bathtubs can be treacherous. The risk can be lessened with the help of grab bars installed both inside and outside of the tub. While in the tub, use a bath chair to prevent falling in the tub.

**Low Toilets**

This may not be a problem for your loved one, but safety comes first, and having grab bars on either side of the toilet can help them with sitting and standing. An elevated toilet seat can raise the height and help with safety issues.

**Slippery Floors**

Bathroom floors are usually made of linoleum or tile, which can be slippery, especially when it gets wet. Consider installing a non-slip mat near the bathtub, sink, and toilet. Make sure that towels are easy for your senior to grab, and that they are accessible for them.

**Hampers**

Be sure that there is an easy to use hamper within handy reach, to hold wet towels and dirty clothes.

**In the Bedroom**

**Safety in the Bedroom**

Seniors may feel comfortable in the bedroom and want to spend most of their time there. That makes it important to check for safety hazards and to make sure that they are comfortable.

**Clutter**

A cluttered room may be difficult to walk through, especially at night. Check to be sure that there is plenty of safe space for your loved one to have a path in and out of the bedroom as needed.

**Organizing Essentials**

You want to make sure that essentials can be found when needed. If you don’t have one, you may want to provide a small nightstand that can hold tissues, glasses, cell phone, or a glass of water… things that are likely to be needed, especially in the night.

**Clothing and Dressing Issues**

To make life easier, try to simplify your senior’s wardrobe. Unsteady hands and weakened vision may make buttons, zippers, and ties difficult to maneuver. Consider supplying a chair for them to sit in, allowing them to dress more comfortably. Finding shoes that slip on or have Velcro closures will make it easier to put on footwear.

**The Laundry Area**

**General Concerns**

The location of the laundry room is perhaps the most important factor when it comes to safety, and the most difficult to change.

If your senior must go up or down stairs to do laundry, there is a big risk, as they will have their arms full, and might be unable to hold a handrail while going up or down the stairs.

**Slip and Fall Risk**

Eliminate all area rugs and keep the floors free from clothes that can cause a fall accident. If the feet get tangled up in clothes or laundry on the floor, falls are more likely to occur.

**Older Appliances Bring Increased Risks**

Invest in a newer washer/dryer set for your seniors. If that is not possible, make sure that the area is well ventilated, and that the dryer vent is clean and clear.

**Move Appliances if Possible**

It may not always be possible or practical, but if your loved one is going to stay in the home, you should look into getting the washer/dryer moved to the best location in the house, convenient and safe.

**Outdoor Safety for Seniors**

**Putting the Green Thumb to Good Use**

Many people enjoy gardening as a hobby and take great joy in working the earth and growing flowers and fruits and vegetables.

But there are safety considerations that we must consider when gardening outdoors. Be mindful of stretching, twisting, and bending to avoid injury.

**Preventing Dehydration and Overheating**

Make sure that your senior always has a water bottle, or source of hydration when working or enjoying themselves outdoors. It can get quite hot in the summer, and dehydration can set in quickly if we’re not careful.

**In the Garage**

Make sure that gardening tools are not kept up high, so they can be reached without straining.

Yard chemicals need to be labeled and dated and kept in a specific area.

There should be a window, or other ventilation in the garage.

Make sure that your loved ones have access to a lawn mowing service in the summer, and snow shoveling service in the winter.

**How Lean on Dee Can Help Seniors?**

**Senior Wellness Check-Ins**

We offer direct communication and support while assuring that the emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being of your loved ones are addressed. We do this by providing three Wellness Check-In visits per month where we utilize a monthly assessment tool to gauge any changes that may occur.

**Home Safety Assessment**

We will assess the living environment, and make recommendations for hardware and fixtures that may need to be installed or repaired to help to support your loved one in the home and making referrals to our list of trusted partners for services that can assist in fixing or installing them. Our goal is to reduce falls and avoidable hospitalizations

​**Housing Placement**

There is a range of reasons why your loved one may need assistance in relocating to a senior living community or skilled nursing facility. If the occasion ever arises, we will be there to help you find the best option for your price range and level of care.

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