



Safety Tips for at Home Caregivers

Caregivers often learn through trial and error the best ways to help an impaired relative including maintaining routines for eating, hygiene and other activities at home. It may also be helpful to receive special training in the use of assistive equipment and managing difficult behaviors. One area that is often overlooked, however, is the potential danger around the home that every senior faces. Following is a simple safety checklist that can significantly improve safety and give you added peace-of-mind.

Be aware of potential dangers from:

1. Fire hazards such as stoves, other appliances, cigarettes, lighters and matches;
2. Sharp objects such as knives, razors and sewing needles;
3. Poisons, medicines, hazardous household products;
4. Loose rugs, furniture and cluttered pathways;
5. Inadequate lighting;
6. Water heater temperature-adjust setting to avoid burns from hot water;
7. Car keys and/or spark plugs-do not allow an impaired person to drive;
8. Items outside that may cause falls, such as hoses, tools, gates.

Be sure to consider:

1. Emergency exits, locks to secure house, and, if necessary, door alarms and/or an identification bracelet and a current photo;
2. Bathroom grab bars, non-skid rugs, paper cups rather than glass;
3. Supervision of food and liquids consumption to ensure proper nutrition and to monitor intake of too much or too little of either;
4. Emergency phone numbers and information.