

Home Safe

Are you in danger in your own home? More people are injured at home than in industrial or automobile accidents. That's a fact. Home can be a safe shelter or a place of hidden dangers and frustrations. There is no question that loose rugs are dangerous. You can slip or trip on the edge and fall. Everyone knows that. Yet, scatter rugs are everywhere. It is better to put non-slip matting underneath or remove them altogether.

Bathtubs are hazardous, particularly when stepping over the side of the bathtub. If you lose your balance, you will grab anything including the towel bar or soap dish. But these are not strong enough to support your weight and can easily give way. Grab bars that are securely positioned, can be helpful to everyone. A rubber mat in the bottom of the tub can prevent slipping.

Stairs are another problem. Check to see that the carpet is secure and treads are not loose. For unfinished stairs, identify the edge of each step with paint or tape in contrasting colour. Handrails must be secured and shaped so that you can get your hand around it for a better grip. If you are looking for a new home, consider having the kitchen, bathroom and bedroom on the main floor so stairs are avoided. This can be a problem if you become temporarily or permanently unable to climb stairs.

Lighting is important. As we age, we need approximately 2 to 3 times more light than when we were younger. Lighting that might have been good for you 10 years ago, may not be sufficient to avoid tripping on something you didn't see. And why not make the lights work for you, rather than fumble in the dark for the light switch. There are devices that turn lights on for you as you enter a room.

People live in a house for many years without being aware of the dangers. Often a few simple changes are all that is needed to prevent a fall. So, take a new look at your house and make your home safe.

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