

STAYING PUT SAFELY IN YOUR HOME

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What is the leading
cause of injury and
hospital admissions
among older
adults?

FALLS



Important Facts About Falls

- An older adult is treated in ERs for a fall **every 13 seconds**.
- 95% of hip fractures occur as a result of falls, with most occurring in people over 70 years of age.
- Falls are the most common cause of traumatic brain injuries (TBIs)
- Falls account for 70% of accidental deaths in persons 75 years of age and older.
- Those who have one fall are 2 to 3 times more likely to fall again.
- Almost 1 out of 3 older people fall each year, but less than half tell their doctors.

What risk factors make you more likely to fall?

- Lower body weakness
- Vitamin D deficiency
- Difficulties with walking and balance
- Use of certain medicines
- Vision problems
- Foot pain or poor footwear
- Hearing problems
- Home hazards or dangers



Doctors are your allies!



Share with
them...



THE GOOD NEWS:

Many falls – especially those at home – are due to hazards that are easy to overlook but, fortunately, also easy to fix!



FLOORS

- Remove all throw rugs
- Always keep floors clear
- Rearrange your furniture to avoid having to walk around it
- Coil or tape cords and wires from lamps, phones, or extension cords to the wall



ENTRANCE

- Have solid, non-stick areas inside any entrance to help secure footing.
- Small landings (less than 5' square) can cause awkward turns, especially if you use an assistive device. You want to have enough room to the side of the door to avoid the door swing. Add to your deck or remount the door to minimize the danger.





STAIRS



- Keep stairs clear of all objects
- Fix loose or uneven stairs
- Have overhead lights at top and bottom of stairs
- Have light switches at top and bottom of stairs
- Remove carpet from stairs. Use non-trip rubber treads, both outdoors and indoors.
- Fix loose handrails. Make sure handrails are on both sides of the stairs.
- Paint a contrasting color on the top edge of stairs

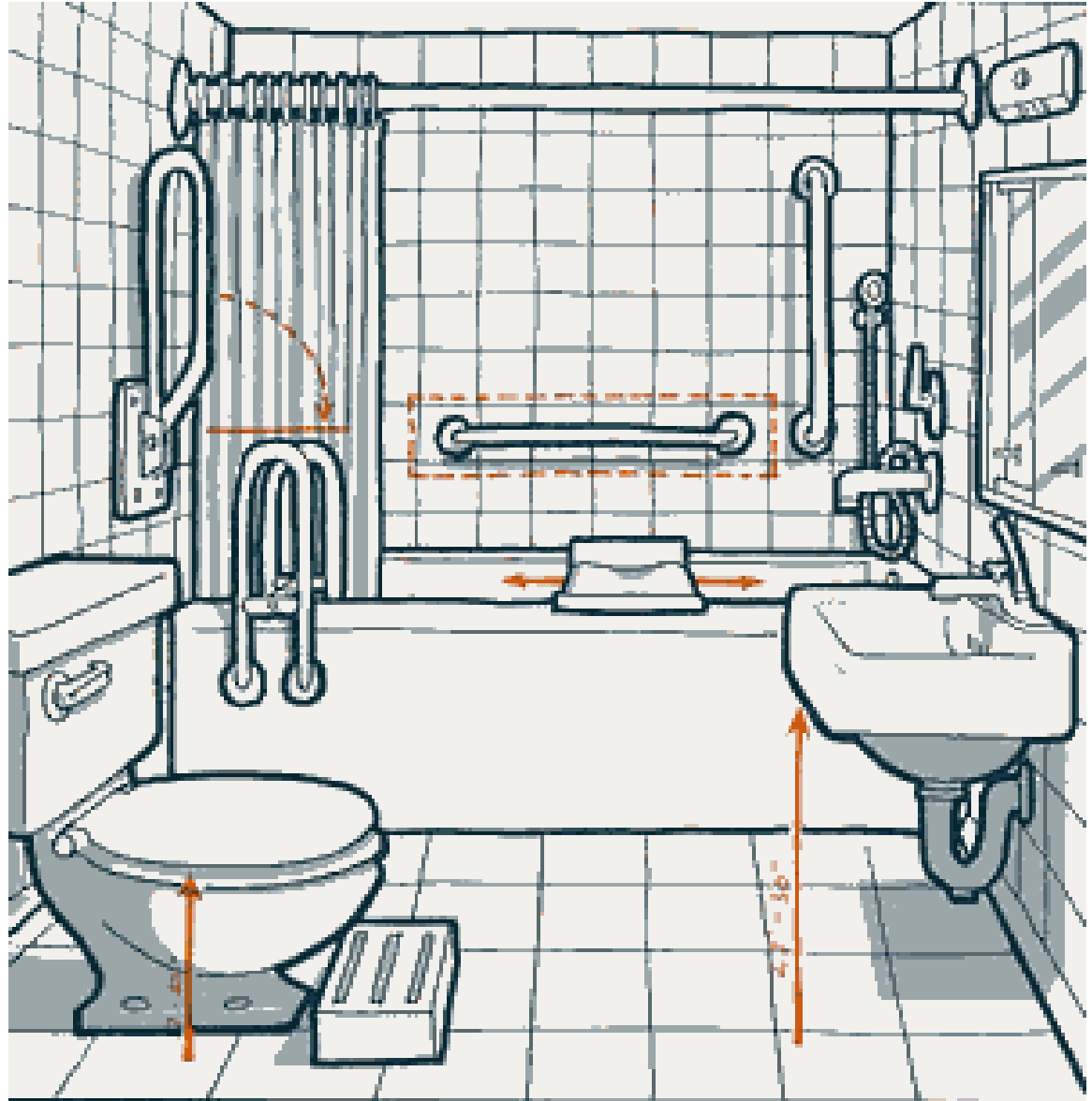
KITCHEN

- Keep things you use most often on the lower shelves of cabinets (about waist level)
- If you must use a step stool, get one with a bar to hold on to and non-skid steps and feet
- If you use a floor mat by the sink, make sure it is secured carefully to the floor



BATHROOM

- Use a non-slip rubber mat or self-stick strips on the floor of the tub or shower
- Install grab bars next to and inside the tub or shower and next to the toilet
- Use a shower seat if you are unsteady or dizzy
- Raise the height of toilets and sinks



BEDROOM

- Ensure the light near your bed is easy to reach and turn on and off. It is possible to get lights with a convenient touch-controlled on/off mechanism.
- Use a nightlight to illuminate your path to the bathroom at night. Consider ones that turn on by themselves after dark



OTHER SAFETY TIPS

- Keep emergency numbers in large print near each phone in your home
- Sign up for **Smart 911**
- Get a **LifeAlert** device: getting prompt help after an immobilizing fall improves the chance of survival by **80%** and increases the likelihood of a return to independent living.

STAY SAFE

STAY

INDEPENDENT

STAY PUT