

Fall Prevention Checklist

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Medications

1. If a person, and especially an elderly person, is taking medications this may have an effect on their balance ?
2. If a person's balance is being badly affected by medications check with their doctor.
3. Make sure that elderly parents know how to take their medications
4. Some people need to take medications for their balance to improve.
5. If remembering to take medications for balance is an issue you may wish to consider a Digital Medication Distributor which will remind the elderly to take medications with an alert system.
6. Is your parent suffering from dizziness at all ?
7. Hypotension – low blood pressure – can cause dizziness, so have blood pressure checked by your doctor.

Shoes

1. Are your elderly loved ones wearing decent footwear ? This is vital to not falling – no slippers which aren't on properly and that aren't attached at the back.

2. Wearing shoes indoors will give good solid support, much more so than slippers.
3. If your parents ankles are weak do they have ankle boots – his will help prevent their ankle from turning and your parents from falling.
4. If your parents have bunions do they have shoes to help with this ?
5. Do your parents shoes have Velcro straps ? These are much easier for people with weaker hands to take on and off.
6. If your parents toes have problems and are rubbing, you could do what I did and take a pair of shoes and cut away the toe of the shoe. Now there is no rubbing at all.
7. If there is foot swelling are the shoes stretchy ? Stretchy shoes can help a great deal for feet which swell.
8. Do the shoes come from a shoe store for the elderly ? You can get shoes for the elderly in extra width sizes.

Mobility Aids

1. Does your parent have a mobility aid for getting around the house ?
2. Have you looked at rolling walkers, called Rollators ? There are narrow indoor models – like these are made to help the elderly with their balance.
3. Would a mobility aid such as a cane or a walker be helpful ?
4. If your parent has a mobility aid such as a walker, does it have a tray ?

5. Walkers as well as the Rollator style models also come with only two wheels, and with no wheels at all – so there are a few to pick from.

Entrances to House

1. Are there rails at the entrances to the house if there are any steps ?
2. Does the front door have a peephole at the right height ?
3. Does the front door have a video bell ?
4. Are there potential tripping hazards ?
5. Can you clearly see and reach any doorbell there may be ?
6. If you have any decks or porches around your exterior doors, do they have railings to prevent people falling off ?
7. If you have a porch, is the surface in good shape, with nothing sticking up which people can catch their feet on ?
8. Is there a non-skid surface if there is a porch ?
9. Do you have proper exterior lighting around your exterior doors ?
10. If you have mats are they flat ?
11. Does any mat have non-skid backing ?
12. Does the doorway have a frame lip which can cause tripping ?
13. If you have to step up a little into the entrance way, do you have a grab bar so that a person can steady themselves after stepping up ?

14. Does your doorway have enough room to open for mobility aids – walkers, rollators or wheelchairs ?
15. Especially for turning and locking the door ?
16. Make sure you don't have loads of coats hanging behind the door restricting how far it will open.
17. Do the doors themselves have the handles, knobs and latches at an easy height, and are they all well oiled and easy to use – lever handles are far easier for seniors to turn ?
18. Make sure your doors don't stick.
19. If you have door springs make sure that the elderly have time to go through before the door starts to close and push on them.
20. Remove any rugs from the entrance hallways which may be too high and cause tripping.
21. If you do want to have rugs in the entrance way, maybe just tack them down so the edges don't cause a hazard.
22. Entrance hallways are very often used as a storage area, so make sure that there are no items getting in the way – don't keep lots of shoes etc up against the edges of the hallway as these will be lethal.
23. Is there a light switch right next to the door as you come in so that the hallway can be brightly lit ? And is it at a good height ?

24. Do you have a light switch at the other end of the hallway for turning off ?
25. Could you install a light with a motion sensor so that when the elderly come in through the entrance the lights come on automatically. They will have one less thing to think about as they are trying to maneuver through the entrance of the house ?
26. If you do install a sensor for the lights, you can set them to turn off automatically as well.
27. Make sure the lighting is bright enough as a lot of elderly have visual impairments.
28. If there are wall sockets are they at a good height ?

Family Rooms – Living Room etc

1. Is there enough lighting ?
2. Do you have switches all over and are they at a good height ?
3. If you have carpets are they properly tacked down ?
4. Do carpets have runners to avoid difficult edges – a lot of seniors shuffle when they walk rather than lifting their feet, so if you can keep all edges as low as possible with smooth transitions you are really making things easier.
5. Make sure that the carpets don't have holes or patches where a person could snag their foot.

6. If you have to have rugs or throws, put anti-slip material underneath or even better tack, or tape, them down.
7. If you have wood, laminate, linoleum flooring, or any other surface which could be slippery, make them slip resistant, or put down carpet.
8. If you have a tiled floor, make sure it doesn't have seriously uneven bits which could cause tripping, and make it slip resistant.
9. If you have blinds which need to be drawn, make sure that they are easy to get to, and that you don't have to lean over furniture to open and close them.
10. Don't have blinds, curtains or shades which are difficult to open and close, and make sure they are sturdy and properly hung and attached.
11. Make sure that as much of your furniture has rounded edges as possible.
12. For furniture with corners you can get soft plastic, or rubber, corner protectors to help against injuries caused from falling against the corners.
13. Is seating in the room too low in general ?
14. Try to make sure that there are chairs at either end of the room which are easily accessible, safe to get in and out of, and clutter free.
15. Is there a clear path through the center of the room, free any obstacles that can be tripped over ?
16. Are there any electric cables which can be tripped on ?

17. Are there any glass tables, or objects which could be easily broken, and which may for someone with poor eyesight be a hazard ?
18. Is all furniture, such as shelves which the elderly are using, at a good and comfortable height for them, making access easy and risk free ?
19. Are any windows easy to open and close ?
20. If there are wall sockets are they at a good height ?

Bathrooms

1. Is there a clear path from the bedroom to the bathroom at night ?
2. Is the path from the bedroom to the bathroom well lit at night ?
3. Does the path from the bedroom to the bathroom have motion sensor lights for nighttime ?
4. Is the frame of the doorway level with the floor ?
5. If necessary is the bathroom doorway wheelchair accessible ?
6. If necessary, is the bathroom doorway wide enough for walkers and rollators ?
7. Is the light switch right by the doorway to the bathroom ?
8. Is it good and bright in the bathroom ?
9. Is there a night light for the bathroom ?
10. Is there an alarm or bell which can be rung if there is a problem ?
11. Is it free from clutter and other hazards ?

12. Do you have non-slip flooring ?
13. Is there a non-slip mat in the bath and shower ?
14. Are there grab bars around the toilet and shower ?
15. If you have any mats are they backed with non-slip material ?
16. If the floor is tiled, are there any uneven bits which need repairing ?
17. Is there an elevated seat for the toilet ?
18. Is the toilet seat secure ?
19. Is there a raised commode frame around the toilet ?
20. Are all the supplies that a person will need all at the correct height for the elderly person using them to eliminate reaching and straining ?
21. Does the shower have a wall rather than a curtain ?
22. Does the shower have at least one grab bar ?
23. If the shower has a curtain is it on the floor where people can trip on it ?
24. Is there a hanging basket in the shower to hold articles at a convenient height ?
25. If necessary is there a shower seat or bench at the right height ?
26. Is there a handheld shower head ?
27. Is there a mixer faucet in the shower with a lever handle ?
28. If necessary is the bathroom doorway wheelchair accessible ?
29. If necessary do you have a waterproof shower walker
30. If necessary, is the bathroom walker wide enough for walkers and rollators ?

31. Is the sink at a good height ?
32. Is there a chair at the sink ?
33. Is the faucet a mixer with a lever handle ?
34. If there is a mirror at the sink, is it at the right height ?
35. If there is a cupboard at the sink, is it at the right height ?
36. If there is a bathtub, does it have a seat ?
37. If there is a bathtub, does it have grab bars ?
38. If there is a bathtub, are the faucets easy to reach ?
39. If there is a bathtub, does it have a mixer tap with a lever handle ?

Stairways

1. Are there good strong rails on both sides of the stairs ?
2. Do the stair rails continue onto the landing ?
3. Is there grasping space for both fingers and knuckles on the rails ?
4. Is the tread of the stairs at least a foot deep ?
5. Are the steps in good condition ?
6. Are the edges of the steps nice and solid and not cracked ?
7. Are the step edges clearly visible ?
8. If the steps are bare wood, are they slip-resistant ?
9. If the steps are carpeted, is the carpet flat and securely attached ?

10. If the steps are carpeted, are there any rough or torn with loose threads, patches, etc ?
11. Is there clutter on the stairs ?
12. Are the stairs brightly lit ?
13. Are there light switches at the top and bottom of the stairs which are easily reached by the elderly ?
14. If necessary, are the top and bottom steps highlighted for the visually impaired ?
15. Are there lights with motion sensors so your loved one doesn't have to reach to switch stairway lights on and off ?

Kitchen

1. Is the Refrigerator at a good height ?
2. If there is a small fridge does it need to be raised up so access doesn't require bending ?
3. Are frequently used items in the refrigerator together, easily reachable and at the best height ?
4. Does the fridge open easily ?
5. Are frequently used foods and pans and utensils in cupboards together and at an easily reachable height ?
6. Are the burners and the knobs on the stove top clearly labeled ?

7. Does the oven open easily
8. Is the sink at a good height and easy to reach ?
9. Is there a good chair to sit on to do chopping tasks etc ?
10. Is there a table to do chopping etc ?
11. Is the kitchen clearly and brightly lit ?
12. Are there light switches at either end of the kitchen ?
13. Make sure there is a clear path through the room ?
14. Are there any cables that you can catch on ?
15. Is there any clutter that needs to be cleared out ?
16. Are there any mats or rugs which need to be removed or tacked down ?
17. If the floor is tiled, is it in a good condition without broken tiles etc ?
18. If the floor is smooth is it slip resistant ?
19. If there are windows that open, are they easy to reach ?
20. If there are windows do they open easily ?
21. Are the wall sockets at a good height ?
22. Are the areas around the wall sockets clear and easy to reach ?

Bedrooms

1. Is there clutter that needs to be removed ?
2. Is there a clear and unobstructed path through the room ?

3. Are there any electric cables and cords on the floor ?
4. If there are rugs on the floor are they flat and backed with non-slip materials ?
5. If the floor is bare wood, or linoleum, is it slip resistant ?
6. If there is carpet, is it in a good condition and tacked down at the edges ?
7. Is the bedroom well lit ?
8. Is there an easy to reach light switch at the entrance to the bedroom ?
9. Is there a light which is easy to reach from the bed ?
10. Is it necessary to get out of bed to get eye glasses ?
11. Is it necessary to get out of bed, or reach too far, to get to the telephone ?
12. If necessary, is there some kind of aid to help people get on and off the bed ?
13. Do you have a non-slip product on the floor where you loved one steps stands up ?
14. A non-slip area on the floor where your loved one gets on and off the bed will give them grip making it a lot easier.
15. How high is the bed from the floor – make it as low as is comfortable to avoid falls – when it is too high, the elderly can have a tendency to slip forwards.
16. If your loved one has trouble getting on and off the bed, see if a walker frame by the bed makes it easier.

17. If your loved one feels as though they need more grip as they stand up from the bed, make sure they put proper shoes on before the stand up – so have the shoes right there.
18. Are the clothes bureaus a good height and are the draws light and easy to use ?
19. Are there curtains or blinds – blinds can be easier to handle ?
20. If there are curtains are they a tripping hazard if the are touching the floor ?
21. Do the curtains or blinds open and close easily ?
22. Are the curtains or blinds easy to reach i.e. no obstacles ?
23. Are the curtains or blinds properly secured ?
24. Are the windows easy to open and close ?
25. Is it easy to reach the windows i.e. no obstacles ?
26. Are there wall sockets which are at a good height and easy to reach ?
27. Is there a nightlight ?

Bedroom Cupboards and Closets

1. Is there lighting ?
2. If there is lighting is it easy to reach ?
3. Is the floor clear of clutter ?
4. Are the doors of cupboards and closets easy to open ?
5. Are cupboards at a good height ?

6. Are all the knobs and handles at a good height ?
7. If the closet has sliding doors do they work properly ?
8. Are the closets and cupboards being used in an organized way ?

Utility Room/Laundry Room

1. Is there a light switch at the entrance ?
2. Is the light switch easy to reach ?
3. Is the doorframe flat at floor level ?
4. Is there sufficient lighting ?
5. Is the Laundry/Utilities room safely accessible ?
6. Is the floor clear of tripping hazards – laundry baskets , detergent bottles and clothes etc ?
7. Is there a clear and unobstructed path in and out of the laundry/utilities room ?
8. Is there some kind of non-slip floor surface – as there will be water ?
9. Are the appliances at a good height for putting clothes in and taking them out ?
10. Are all the controls clearly marked and easy to reach, and the knobs to use ?
11. If needed are there any reminder instructions for the appliances on display ?
12. Are the laundry supplies easy to reach ?
13. Are there wall sockets which are at a good height and easy to reach ?

Frequently used items

1. Are cleaning supplies easy to get to and at the right height ?
2. Is the vacuum cleaner a full sized model ?
3. Is there a lightweight mini vacuum ?
4. Is the vacuum cleaner stored in a clutter free cupboard with easy access ?
5. Are brooms stored where there is easy access ?
6. Are dustpans and brushes stored at any easy level for access ?
7. Is there a desk or some other writing area where any paperwork can be done ?
8. Does this writing area have everything easily in reach at a good level ?
9. If the kitchen isn't very well adapted maybe a few favourite utensils can be kept together in one easy to reach area ?
10. Are extension cords in good shape ?
11. Are all the wall sockets in good shape ?
12. Are there dustpans and brushes on long handles to avoid bending down for cleaning?

Outside Areas -If your elderly parents can go outside you will need to check there too

Driveway

1. Is the driveway smooth and even ?
2. Where the driveway transitions into other areas around the house are there steps and obstacles which need looking at ?
3. Are there uneven bits of paving or rocks that can be tripping hazards ?
4. Is the driveway too steep for an elderly person ?

Paths and Walkways

1. Are all the paths and walkways smooth and free of tripping hazards ?
2. Are there any handrails for support ?
3. Are there any steps, and if so are they clearly visible ?
4. If there are steps, are the top and bottom steps clearly indicated ?
5. Are all the transitions between different surfaces smooth and level ?
6. Do any plants cause obstructions or tripping hazards ?

Garage

1. Is the garage properly lit ?
2. Is the light switch easy to access ?

3. Is the entrance to the garage smooth and level ?
4. Is there a clear pathway to walk through the garage ?
5. Is there clutter which can cause tripping ?
6. Are all electric cables off the floor?
7. Are cupboards and shelves at the right height for easy access ?
8. Are the cupboards and shelves well lit ?
9. Does the garage door open automatically ?

Exterior Doorways

1. Are the doorways well lit ?
2. Do all the doors have railings if there are steps ?
3. If there are steps are they clutter free ?
4. Are the steps low enough ?
5. Are there any grab bars around the doorways ?
6. If there are steps, are they sturdy?
7. If there are steps are they in good condition and level ?
8. If there are steps and they are wood, are they slip resistant ?
9. If there are steps and they have some kind of tread is it tacked down flat ?
10. Do the steps need replacing with a ramp ?

Exterior Lighting

1. Does the driveway have sufficient lighting ?
2. Does the garage exterior have sufficient lighting ?
3. Do the walkways and paths have sufficient lighting ?
4. Do the doors have sufficient lighting ?
5. Does the garbage area have sufficient lighting ?