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Introduction

There's no place like home — and sometimes it seems like there's no place safer. However, for seniors, the home is where many injuries occur, and most of these are falls. In fact, 59.9 percent of all injuries reported by Canadian seniors in 1994 took place in the home or surrounding area. Changes that are part of the normal aging process, such as declining vision, hearing, sense of touch or smell, can increase the risk of injury. For example, as a result of reduced vision, older adults will have more difficulty in detecting slippery or uneven surfaces, which increases their risk of falling. Injuries can also be more of a problem for seniors because, as the body ages, it takes longer to heal and recover from injury.

You might think that “accidents just happen” and that nothing can really be done to prevent them. Not all injuries are preventable, but by taking some straightforward measures you can reduce your chances of being injured at home. It's a matter of knowing what the potential hazards are, taking precautions and making adjustments. These changes can make a big difference!

This guide will give you some ideas about what you can do to prevent injuries in and around your home. It looks at two main areas: your home and yourself.

Section I – Your home — includes a home safety checklist, suggestions of various consumer products that can add to your safety, as well as ideas for renovation planning.

Section II – Yourself — discusses how you can modify your personal lifestyle to reduce your risk of injury by looking at physical activity, attitudes and the use of medications.

The guide also contains several stories that show how people who made changes in their homes or in their lives benefited from them. Practical information in the form of fact sheets and tips, as well as a resource section, complete the guide.

The guide will be useful to seniors and those who care for them. It can be used by itself or in the context of discussions or workshops with seniors. As such, the guide is adaptable and can be used to meet particular needs.

As the old saying goes: “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” Likewise, taking action to prevent home injuries can help you to live comfortably and safely in your own home for many years to come. This guide is meant to be a practical tool to help you along the way.

SECTION I – YOUR HOME



PERSONAL STORY:

“For Safety’s Sake”

When Eileen Shannon was taking care of her ailing mother-in-law, she decided to get grab bars installed in her bathroom.

She also acquired a bath seat. She was pretty familiar with safety devices, and she knew her mother-in-law needed the support in the bathroom. Now, to her surprise, several years later, Eileen finds herself using those same grab bars. Although Eileen is generally speaking fairly healthy, she did have two unexpected bouts of illness. “I thought, I’m 69, I won’t need those things. But when you get ill, and you come back [from the hospital] and you’re weak, you’re mighty glad to have that bar on the bathtub.”

Eileen’s house has other safety features she installed and which she finds handy, such as improved lighting, night lights, lever taps that are easy to manipulate. She lives in a large home, and her house is the place everyone gathers for family get-togethers. She has also child-proofed her home for her grandchildren. When she looks ahead to the future, she sees herself remaining in this house for a long time to come.



HOME SAFETY CHECKLIST:

"BECOMING A HOUSE DETECTIVE"



The culprit in many home injuries can be seemingly innocent things around your home — many of which are easily fixed. All it takes is some detective work to track them down. This checklist will help you inspect your home for evidence of trouble that may be waiting to happen. Every **"NO"** answer is a clue that your home may not be as safe as it could be. If you answer "NO", check the "TO DO" box as a reminder that a change is needed.

Outside the Home

YES NO TO DO

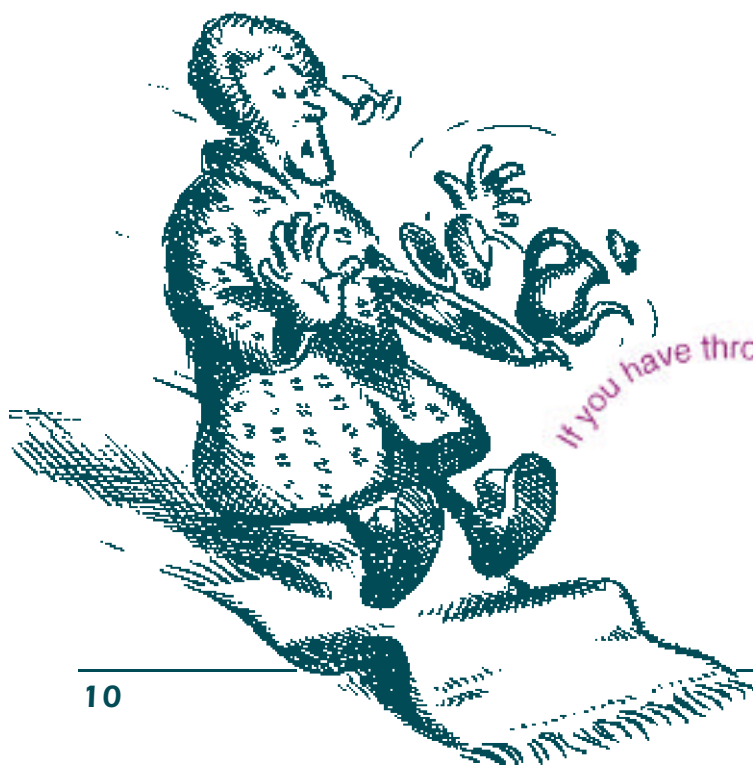
- Are the front steps and walkway leading to your house or apartment in good repair?
- Does your front entrance have an outdoor light?
- Does the doorway to your balcony or deck have a low door sill or threshold that will not trip you?
- Do you have non-slip surfaces on the balcony, porch or patio?
- If you live in a rural area, and don't have an address on your home, is your home clearly identifiable in some way, for example, with your name on the mailbox?
- Are stairs and walkways kept free of snow, ice or leaves in the wintertime? Does the surface provide good traction?

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TIP IF YOU LIVE IN A RURAL AREA, HAVE DIRECTIONS TO YOUR HOME BY EACH PHONE IN YOUR HOUSE. MAKE SURE THE DIRECTIONS ARE CLEAR. THEY SHOULD REFER TO MAIN ROADS AND IDENTIFIABLE LANDMARKS, SO ANYONE COULD FIND YOUR HOME QUICKLY IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY.

General	Yes	No	To Do
▪ If you have throw rugs and scatter mats, do they have non-skid backing on them to keep them from slipping? (These types of rugs and mats can be treacherous. If you can part with them, it's a good idea not to have them at all.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ If you have throw rugs and scatter mats, do you ensure that they are not placed in high traffic areas or at the top of a stairway, where they can lead to a serious fall?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ If you use floor wax, do you use the non-skid kind?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Are your floor surfaces free from glare?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Do you have an easy-to-read list of emergency telephone numbers near the phone?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ If you live in an apartment, and have trouble getting around, are you registered on your building's fire safety plan? (Every apartment building is required to have a fire safety plan, which, among other things, indicates which tenants need help to evacuate the building in case of an emergency.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Do you have an escape route in case of fire and a fire safety plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Are your traffic areas clear of telephone or electrical cords?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ If you use a space heater, is it placed well away from flammable substances and materials that are likely to catch fire?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

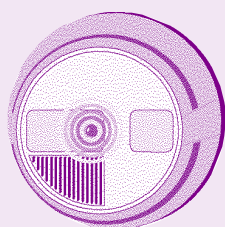


If you have throw rugs and scatter mats, do they have non-skid backing?

	Yes	No	To Do
▪ If you have older appliances, have you recently checked them for worn or frayed cords?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Do you know which of your appliances need (grounded) three-pronged plugs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ In general, is your home well lit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Are the floors in your home free of obstacles, such as toys and parcels; and do you watch that your pets are not underfoot?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Is there a smoke alarm on every floor of your home?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Do you test your smoke alarm every six months?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Do you have a carbon monoxide alarm in your home?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Do you keep important documents in a fire resistant box or cabinet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



TIP TO REMEMBER TO TEST YOUR SMOKE ALARM TWICE A YEAR, MAKE A HABIT OF TESTING IT WHEN YOU TURN YOUR CLOCKS FORWARD IN THE SPRING AND BACK IN THE FALL.



TIP INSTALL A SEAT AT THE ENTRANCE OF YOUR HOME FOR PEOPLE TO SIT AND REMOVE OR PUT ON THEIR FOOTWARE.

Do you watch that pets are not underfoot?



Stairs

- Do you have light switches at the top and bottom of the stairs?
- Are your stairs in good repair?
- Do the steps of your stairs have a non-skid surface?
- If you have runner mats, carpeting, treads or any other kind of floor covering on your stairs, are they well fastened?
- Are there solid handrails or banisters on both sides of the stairway?
- Are stairs free of clutter?
- Is your stairway well lit?

Yes

No

To Do

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TIP



TO HELP AVOID TAKING A MISSTEP, WOODEN OR CONCRETE STEPS CAN BE PAINTED WITH A STRIP OF CONTRASTING COLOUR ON THE EDGE OF EACH STEP OR THE TOP AND BOTTOM STEPS.

Bathroom

	Yes	No	To Do
▪ Are hot and cold faucets clearly marked?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Do you test the water temperature before getting into the bathtub?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Do you have a rubber bath mat, or a non-slip surface to make the bathtub or shower less slippery?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Do you have grab bars that have been properly placed (by the toilet and near the bathtub), and well-anchored to the wall?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Is the light switch close to the entrance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Do you have a night light in the bathroom?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ If you have trouble taking a shower standing up, do you have a "bath seat" so you can take a shower sitting down?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Do you use electrical appliances such as hair dryers and shavers well away from the shower, sink and other sources of water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ If you have any trouble getting on and off the toilet, do you have a raised toilet seat and a grab bar?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

TIP



IF THE WATER FROM YOUR HOT WATER TAP IS TOO HOT, THE REGULATOR ON YOUR HOT WATER TANK CAN BE ADJUSTED TO LOWER THE WATER TEMPERATURE. IF YOU LIVE IN AN APARTMENT, ASK THE SUPERINTENDENT TO CHECK AND ADJUST THE TEMPERATURE FOR YOU.

If you have any trouble getting on and off the toilet, do you have a raised toilet seat?



Kitchen

Yes No To Do

- Are your pots and pans, canned goods and staple foods (such as flour, sugar and so on) stored in an easy-to-reach location? ☐ ☐ ☐
- Are heavy items in the lower cupboards and light items in the higher cupboards? ☐ ☐ ☐
- Do you have a stable step stool (with a safety rail) for reaching high places? ☐ ☐ ☐
- Are the "off" and "on" positions on the stove dials clearly marked? ☐ ☐ ☐
- Are your oven mitts in a handy location? ☐ ☐ ☐
- Do you make certain that your oven mitts do not come in contact with stove elements? (Oven mitts are NOT fire proof.) ☐ ☐ ☐
- Do you make sure never to cook while wearing loose-fitting clothing or sleepwear? (This type of garment can easily catch fire from contact with stove elements.) ☐ ☐ ☐
- Do you have a fire extinguisher in the kitchen, mounted on the wall away from the stove? ☐ ☐ ☐
- Do you know how your fire extinguisher works? ☐ ☐ ☐
- Do you regularly check that your fire extinguisher is in good operating order? ☐ ☐ ☐

TIP



USE HEAT-RESISTANT OVEN MITTS RATHER THAN POT HOLDERS. WITH OVEN MITTS, YOU CAN GET A BETTER GRIP ON HOT CONTAINERS.

LONGER OVEN MITTS PROVIDE BETTER PROTECTION.

Are your oven mitts in a handy location?



Bedroom

- Is there a light switch near the entrance to your bedroom?
- Is there a clear path from your bed to the bathroom?
- Do you have a phone near your bed?
- Do you have a lamp or a light switch near your bed?
- Do you have night lights in the halls in case you get up in the middle of the night?

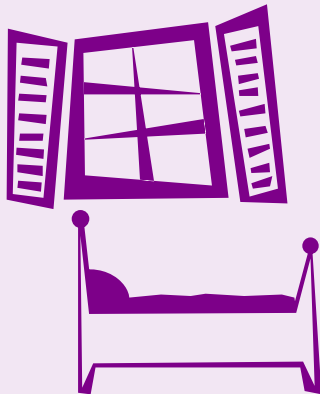
Yes No To Do

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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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TIP



YOU CAN PURCHASE LIGHTSENSITIVE NIGHT LIGHTS WHICH DIM DURING THE DAY AND BRIGHTEN WHEN IT GETS DARK.



Is there a clear path

from your bed to the bathroom?



Garage/Basement/Workroom

- Do you have a telephone in the basement?
- Are your workroom and laundry room well lit?
- Is your work area well ventilated?
- Are all chemicals, such as bleach, cleaners and paint thinners, in their original containers?
- Are all chemicals stored as indicated by the directions on the label?
- Are flammable materials, such as paint, paint remover and lighter fluid, stored away from sources of heat and flame?
- If you have a gas barbecue, is your propane tank stored outside of the house? (Stored inside, it is a serious fire hazard!)
- Are your newspapers regularly discarded?
- Are heavy items on lower shelves or bottom cupboards?
- If you use a ladder, is it safe and in good repair?

Yes No To Do

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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TIP



DO YOUR
FUSES OR
CIRCUIT

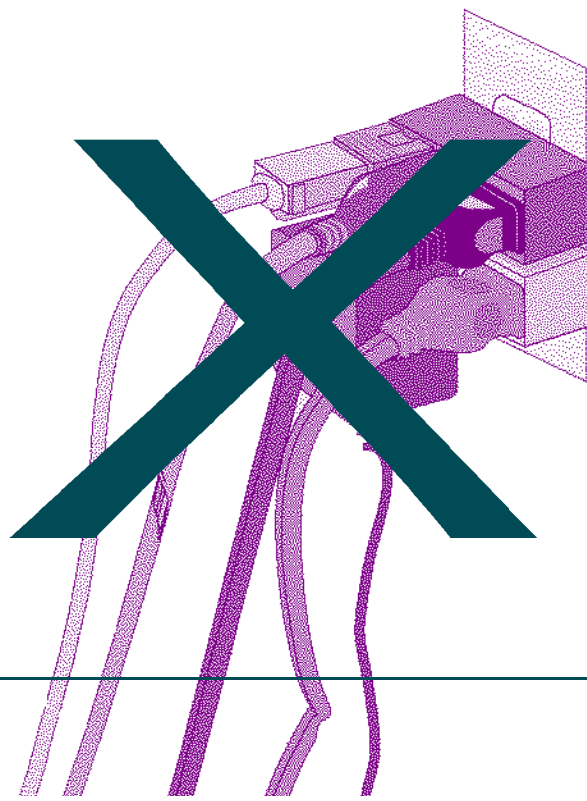
BREAKERS BLOW
REGULARLY? YOU
MAY NEED TO HAVE A
QUALIFIED ELECTRI-
CIAN INSPECT YOUR
WIRING.

TIP



RECYCLING
IS A GOOD
WAY OF DIS-
CARDING

NEWSPAPERS AND
ELIMINATING A
POTENTIAL FIRE HAZ-



HOME SAFETY CHECKLIST:

"MAKING YOUR HOME SAFE FOR CHILDREN"

Now that you have gone from room to room and checked your home for your own safety, you might want to make sure it's also safe for any children who come to visit. Most of the things you have checked also apply in the case of children, but there are also some special safety considerations to be made. Keep in mind that a house that is safe for older adults may not necessarily be safe for children. Here are tips and contacts sure to help.



TIP



KEEP EMERGENCY NUMBERS HANDY.

THE FIRST STEP IN HOME SAFETY IS TO KEEP A LIST OF EMERGENCY NUMBERS ON THE PHONE. MAKE SURE YOUR LIST INCLUDES:

- ☐ POLICE
- ☐ FIRE
- ☐ AMBULANCE
- ☐ DOCTOR
- ☐ POISON CONTROL CENTRE
1-800-267-1373
- ☐ CLOSE RELATIVE OR FRIEND
- ☐ NUMBER WHERE THE BABYSITTER
CAN REACH YOU

TIP



BEWARE OF GARAGE SALES.

REMEMBER TO EXERCISE CARE AND SAFETY THE NEXT TIME YOU ARE PLANNING TO HOLD A GARAGE SALE OR SHOP AT ONE. MANY CHILDREN'S PRODUCTS SUCH AS CRIBS, STROLLERS, PLAYPENS AND TOYS NO LONGER MEET SAFETY STANDARDS. ANYONE HOLDING A GARAGE SALE IS RESPONSIBLE TO ENSURE THAT PRODUCTS, WHETHER NEW OR USED, MEET ALL SAFETY REQUIREMENTS.



Contact: If you want more information on how to make your home safe for children, contact:

**Product Safety Bureau, Health Canada
Main Statistics Canada Building,
Wing 1000**

**Address Locator: 0301B2
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0K9
Tel: (613) 952-1014**

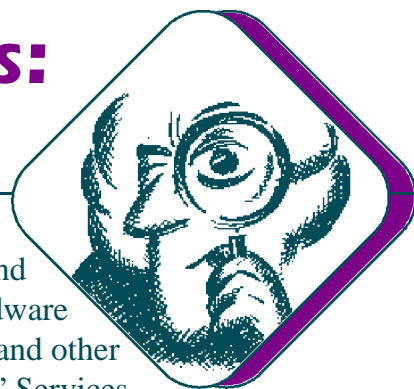
- ☐ Ask for the free booklet **Is Your Child Safe?** (available in French and English). It is full of tips and safety ideas.

**The National Film Board of Canada
P.O. Box 1600
Montreal, Quebec H3C 3H5
Tel: 1-800-267-7710**

- ☐ Ask for the video **Every Dog's Guide to Complete Home Safety.** It is accompanied by a home-safety guide entitled **Make Your Home Safe for Infants and Young Children.** The cost is \$21.95 and it is available in English and French.

SAFETY-RELATED PRODUCTS:

"SHOPPING FOR SAFETY"



Here is a list of consumer products that are designed to make life easier, more enjoyable and safer. Many are not very expensive, and some would make nice gifts. These products can be found in hardware stores, pharmacies, medical supply stores, mail-order catalogues and other specialty stores. Look in the yellow pages under "Senior Citizens' Services and Centres", "Hospital Equipment and Supplies" and "Medical Supplies".

APPLIANCES WITH AUTOMATIC SHUT-OFF

An **automatic shut-off** switch is a feature of many appliances, such as kettles, irons, electric frying pans, toaster ovens and so on. The switch turns the appliance off once it has been idle for a few minutes' time, eliminating the potential risk of fire.

APPROPRIATE FOOTWEAR

Wearing appropriate footwear can help to prevent falls. Appropriate footwear is comfortable and provides good support. Lower heels are easier on your feet and back, and are more stable for walking. Shoes with smooth, slippery soles can cause you to fall. Sticky composition soles, such as crepe soles, can stick to carpets and trip you.



BATH SEATS

These portable seats allow you to take a shower sitting down. If you have trouble getting into a tub, you can sit up higher. Some models are especially designed to make it easier to get in and out of the tub.

BATH MATS

A rubber bath mat can make bathtubs and showers less slippery to stand in. Bath mats have to be put down while the tub is still dry, as they may not adhere properly to a wet surface. The only drawback seems to be cleaning them. Here's a tip: to clean them, throw them in the washing machine or dishwasher. If you use the dishwasher, be sure to remove the mat before the dry cycle.

CANES

Canes can be a handy aid for walking, and these days they come in some fashionable styles too. However, it's very important to make sure your cane is the right height and that the rubber tips are checked every once in a while to ensure they are still in good shape.

CANE SPIKES

These fit over the end of your cane for extra grip on an icy day. Spikes with four or five prongs are the best. Many spike attachments flip up or down as needed. The spikes should be flipped up or taken off your cane when you enter a store or shopping mall, as the spike can slip on tile surfaces.

CARPET BACKING/UNDERPADDING

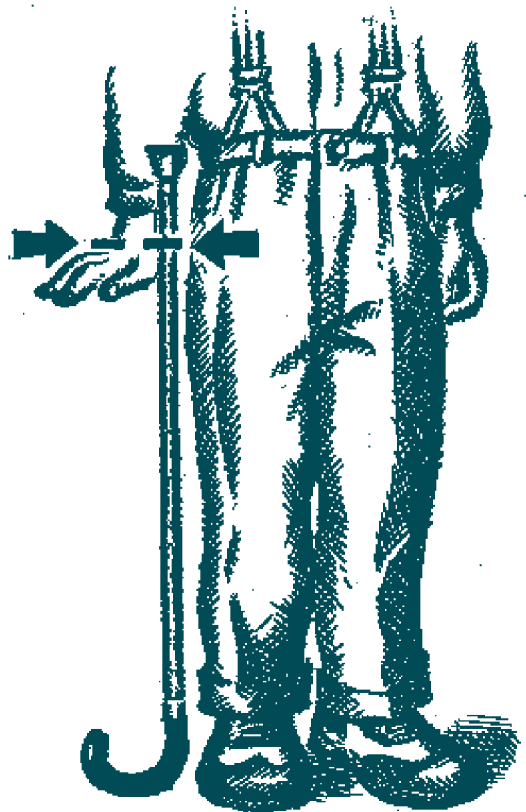
Scatter rugs can be dangerous. If you can't part with them, make sure they are firmly attached to the floor. Non-slip carpet backing or underpadding is crucial to help keep them in place. Double-sided tape can also be used to tack rugs down. These items can be purchased at most stores that sell carpeting and at some department stores.

CORDLESS TELEPHONES

Cordless phones can be safer because the receiver can be separated from the telephone's base, eliminating the need to run telephone cords across a room or across frequently travelled areas. This way, there are no cords to trip over, and you can keep the phone close by.

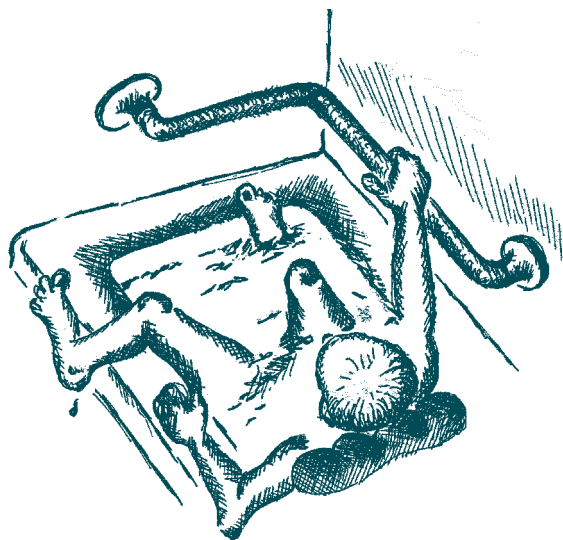
EMERGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEMS

These units are communication devices that will get help for you in case of an emergency. A variety of businesses and some non-profit organizations are involved in this kind of service. The company will install the device in your home for a minimal price, and then charge a monthly fee to monitor the unit. You wear a wristwatch- or pendant-type of device with a call button, which you press in case of an emergency. To find out more about these devices, look in the Yellow Pages under "Medical Alarms".



GRAB BARS

Grab bars installed by the bathtub or shower and beside the toilet can provide more stability and help prevent slips and falls. Towel racks should never be used for support, since they are not properly anchored to the wall for this purpose. Grab bars must be anchored firmly into the studs in the wall and should be installed by someone who is skilled in this type of work.



HAND-HELD SHOWER HEADS

A hand-held shower head can make showering easier, especially if you're using a bath seat. The shower head can also be installed with two or three mounting positions, allowing it to be used by standing or seated bathers. This type of shower head is relatively easy to install, and portable models are also available.

MEDICATION BOXES OR DOSETTES

These organizers can help keep track of medications, but they are not childproof, and must be stored out of the reach of children.

NIGHT LIGHTS

Stumbling around in the dark is dangerous. Night lights that plug into an outlet are inexpensive, and many have a built-in sensor that turns the night light on only when the room is dim. It's a good idea to put one between your bedroom and bathroom.

POT STABILIZERS

This item consists of a wire frame that keeps pots from spinning while you're stirring the contents. Since this item holds the pot handle in place, it can also prevent the cook or any children from accidentally knocking the pot off the stove.

RAISED TOILET SEATS

A seat raised four to six inches above the toilet bowl can make getting on and off the toilet easier. There are many designs available — some adjustable, some portable and some with safety/hand rails.

REACHERS

For those who have trouble bending or reaching high places, these devices will do the trick. Many have suction cups or magnets on the ends to ensure a firm grip on the object to be reached.

SAFETY SHOE SOLES

Anti-skid detachable soles with studded treads make walking safer in the wintertime. The safest design is a full sole that runs the entire length of the shoe. These have to be removed when walking indoors, such as in a shopping mall, since they will slip on floor surfaces.

WALKERS

If walking for 20 minutes without help is a problem for you, a walker could be worth having. With a walker, you can go further, longer and, with some models, you can even have a seat when you want to take a break. Many models also come with a basket for carrying packages. Special tote bags that attach to the walker can also be purchased.

WIRE/CORD CLIPS

These self-adhesive items enable you to tack down electrical and telephone cords along the walls so they don't run across the floors, where they're more likely to cause you to trip. These clips can be found at most hardware stores.



PERSONAL STORY: “Planning Ahead”

Seven years ago, when the Krzaniaks decided to have some renovations done to their home, they were thinking ahead to the future. As Stan explains, they had a small addition with a laundry room built on the back of their three-bedroom bungalow. “It’s the equivalent of having a condominium, really,” he says, “having all the facilities you would normally need right on one floor.”

They also made sure other safety features were built into the house. “We installed rails on both sides of the stairs going down to the basement. We have a total of six telephones in the house. If a telephone rings, it’s there. You never have to run to the phone. We have smoke detectors and lots of lights. One thing we might add later on if we become a little unsteady on the feet are rails along the hall, or wherever we’ve got an open wall. That’s a small thing to do.”

Stan recently suffered a heart attack. He participates in mall-walking to get some exercise to help recuperate. He’s also started hiring people to do many of the outdoor chores he used to do himself — like shovelling snow and digging out the garden. The Krzaniaks are fortunate to have the savings to spend this way. In Stan’s opinion it is money well spent. “I think you have to balance the benefits against the expense. If you look at the number of people who have fallen down with heart attacks while shovelling snow — why, it probably pays to get someone to do it.”

The Krzaniaks are quite active in a number of clubs and social activities. As Stan puts it, “We feel quite young. Everybody else is old — or else very young.” Stan feels that the precautions he and his wife are taking around the house are their way of promoting their independence.



HOME ADAPTATIONS: “THINKING OF RENOVATING? THINK SAFETY!”



If you're thinking about renovating your home in the near future, why not consider building in a few additional safety features? These renovations will help make your home a comfortable and safer place for years to come. Should you decide to move, the increased safety and accessibility could also be selling features. If you need help finding reliable tradespeople to do renovations, word of mouth is often one of the best ways. Ask friends and acquaintances for information, and be sure to get price quotes from at least two potential contractors. The following suggestions will give you some ideas for your renovation planning.

ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

Adding more electrical outlets in convenient locations for appliances can add to the safety of your home. Several well-placed outlets will help prevent overloading of certain outlets, or having to run electrical cords across areas where they may be in the way. Extension cords should never be used on a permanent basis, since this presents a fire hazard.

LIGHTING

It's important to have plenty of well-positioned and well-diffused lighting. It's best to avoid lighting that creates glare or shadows. Extra lighting should be installed in stairways and over areas where specific tasks are done, for example over the bathroom sink and kitchen work areas.

If you live in an older home, the wiring may need to be updated. If you are changing the lighting and wiring, you may also want to consider the location of the switches so that they are placed in the most convenient location, such as

near the entrance to a room and at both the top and bottom of a flight of stairs. Lower light switches are also more convenient for people using a wheelchair. The type of switch is another important thing to consider. Rocker panel switches are easy to use. Dimmer switches allow you to leave certain lights on low, for example, between the bedroom and bathroom.

DOORS

If you plan to work on or replace a door, check the height of the door sill or threshold. It should be no more than 1/2" (13 mm) high. It may be a good idea to reduce or remove the door sill, because uneven surfaces can lead to a trip or a fall. You may also widen doorways to accommodate wheelchairs. You may want to replace doorknobs with lever handles, which are easier to use, but make sure the levers are angled away from the door opening to ensure they don't catch on clothing. Also, consider the advantages of sliding or swinging doors, and doors that open outward.

STAIRS

The backs of stairs should be closed in. There should be firmly anchored handrails on both sides of the stairway, which extend beyond the top and bottom steps. The handrail should also be mounted far enough out from the wall to allow for a solid grip. In addition, the stairway should be well lit and the steps should have a non-slip surface.

FLOORING

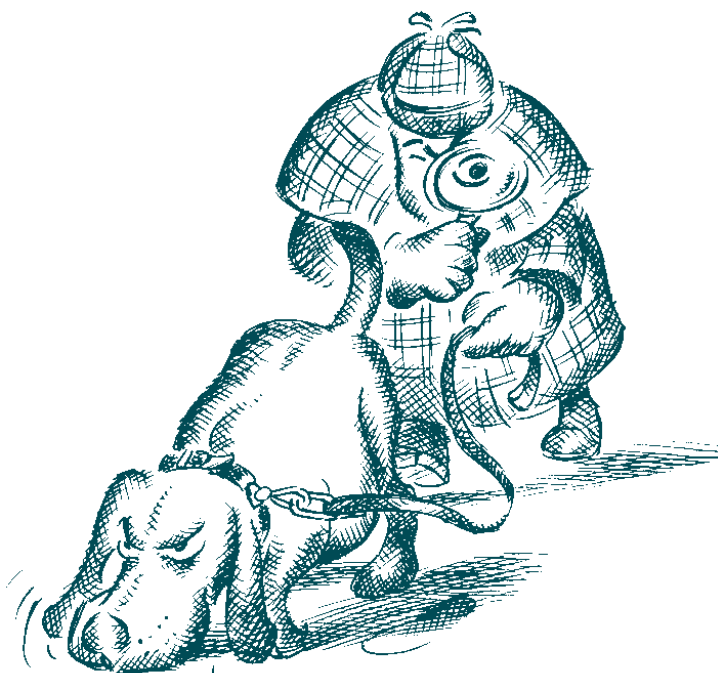
If you're replacing flooring, use non-glare, slip-resistant flooring material. A hard floor surface or tight pile carpeting is best. Consider using the same floor surface over different areas in order to eliminate uneven surfaces.

KITCHEN

For efficiency and convenience in your kitchen, consider adding lower level shelves, such as between the counter top and cupboard level. Lower cupboards, sliding shelves, and lazy susans in cupboard corners put kitchen items within easier reach. A pantry with low-level shelves may also be worth considering. If you plan to replace your kitchen taps, lever-type or control-arm-type faucet handles are easier to use.

BATHROOM

Taps with lever faucet handles are easier to use. Installing grab bars around the shower or bathtub and beside the toilet can help prevent falls in the bathroom. Portable bath seats are available, but you may want to consider building in a fold-down shower seat. If you do choose this



option, make sure that the shower controls are easy to reach and operate for anyone using the shower seat. A hand-held shower head is more convenient to use than the traditional shower head.

CLOSET SPACE

The closet is one area where useful and relatively simple renovations can be made. Consider installing lights inside your closets. Adjustable and pull-out shelves and clothing racks are convenient. The clothes bar and shelf could also be lowered, making them easier to reach.

LOCKS AND LATCHES

Door locks in bathrooms must have an emergency release. Locks and latches should have large, easily manipulated knobs or levers. The market now has models that offer both safety and security, for example, push-button or card-access locks.

SECTION II – YOURSELF



FACT SHEET:

"JUST THE FACTS — THE EFFECTS OF AGING"

Aging affects each individual differently. Some seniors experience physical limitations that seriously affect their level of activity, while others are able to remain quite active. The natural process of growing older, however, generally includes changes in abilities. The following describes sensory loss and other changes that people experience as they grow older. If you are experiencing problems associated with these changes, consult your health professional.



VISION

- Eyes take longer to adjust from dark to light and vice versa. Accidents are more likely to happen when people have to adjust to sudden changes in the level of lighting. This is why night lights can be helpful.
- Eyes become more sensitive to glare, for example, from sunlight and unshielded light bulbs. This is one reason why it is better to have glare-free flooring.
- There is a decline in depth perception. This can make it difficult to judge distances, for example, when reaching for something in a high place. This is one reason among others to keep often-used items on lower shelves.
- It is not as easy to see contrasts and colours. For example, an older person may have trouble seeing rug edges, door thresholds or wet surfaces.

TOUCH, SMELL AND HEARING

- Sensitivity to heat, pain and pressure decreases. This means, for example, that an older person may not realize water is hot enough to scald them until it is too late, or that it may be difficult to detect changes in ground or floor surfaces.
- The sense of smell diminishes, making it harder to smell spoiled food, leaking gas and smoke, for example.
- Another sensory change in older people is hearing loss. This may result in difficulty hearing telephones, door bells, smoke alarms, etc. This change can also result in a decrease in balance, which can make falling more likely.

BALANCE AND GAIT

- Balance is a complex function involving, for example, vision, muscular strength and joint flexibility. Any one of these and other factors can change as a result of aging. One reason why exercise is important for preventing falls is because muscular strength affects balance.
- A general decline in equilibrium can make it more difficult to maintain or recover balance, meaning that a slip or trip can become a fall.
- The manner of walking often changes. The speed of walking, how high the heels are lifted, and the length of a person's stride can all change. These changes can make it more likely for someone to experience a fall.



PERSONAL STORY: “Friends in Deed”

One difficult challenge Evelyn Dufort had to face because of her arthritis didn't have anything to do with the pain and physical changes the disease causes. It had to do with learning to ask for help. Evelyn was always the type to get things done, and keep things around her house clean and organized. Now, because of her arthritis, there are a lot of things she really can't do anymore without running the risk of hurting herself. “It's hard asking for help. You feel strange,” she says. “At the beginning, I think you feel inadequate, not being able to do all your own housework.”

It took Evelyn a while to get over this way of thinking. She didn't want to injure herself, and she didn't want to “let the place go” either. She started to find her way out of this dilemma when she joined a seniors' exercise club. “By being active with the group, and listening to other people's problems, how things have been for them, and how their problems have been solved, you realize that there is a way of obtaining those services to help you.” Evelyn found out about the services that were available in her community. After a while, she also learned to ask people she could trust and feel comfortable with to help her out. This way, she did not feel as though her privacy was being invaded.

Evelyn also uses a number of aids that help her do housework — items such as jar openers, and mops that are easy to squeeze. And because she knows she's at risk for stumbling and falling, she's been careful about the way things are set up. “I have a grab bar in the bathroom. I have proper lighting, that's for sure. I do keep a night light on. I put carpeting on my stairs going down into the basement, and I make sure there are no tears, or anything like that, in it. I don't use wax. It's things like that I take care of.”



ATTITUDE QUIZ:

"RISKY BUSINESS"



Even if you don't indulge in wing-walking or skydiving, you could still be a risk taker. In many ways, living means taking risks. Really, the question is not "Are you a risk taker?" but rather "Are you a smart risk taker?" Being a smart risk taker means knowing which risks to take, and which not to. It's about knowing your limitations and recognizing what might be a risk in the first place. The decisions you make and activities you do place you at greater or lesser risk of injuring yourself.

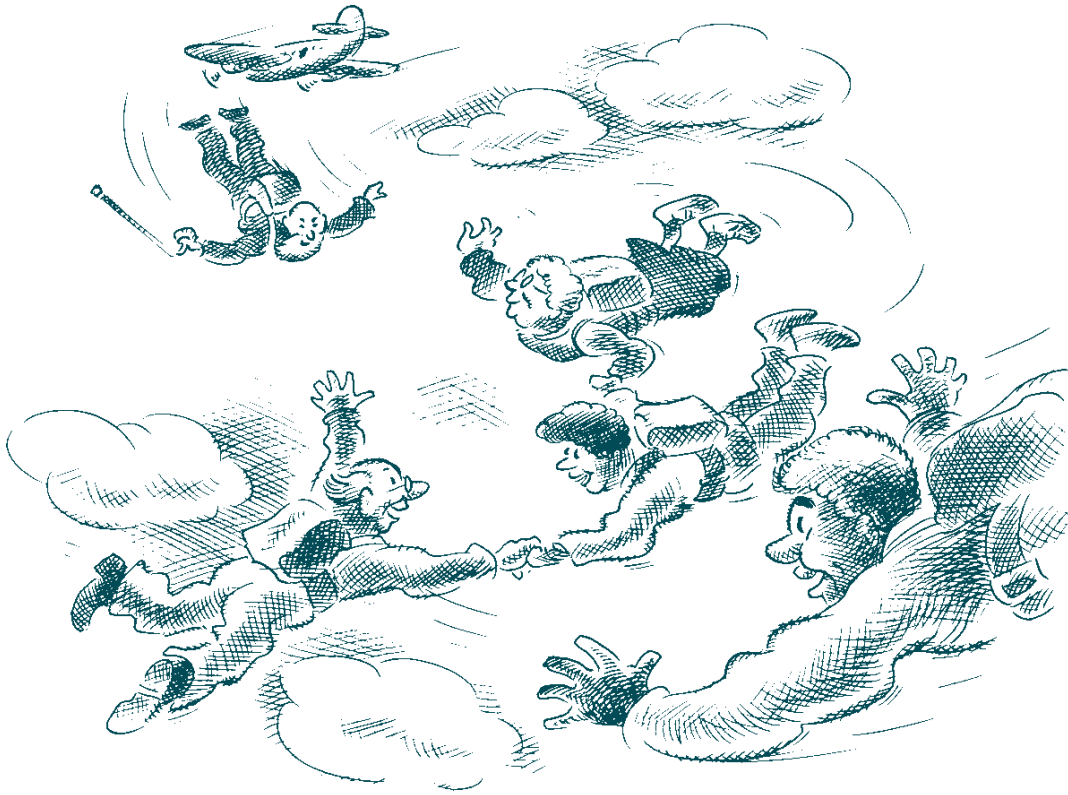
Are you a "smart risk taker"? To start you thinking about what might be risky business, try this quiz and see how you score. Choose the answer you feel is the best approach for each situation.

1. YOU USUALLY GO FOR A WALK EVERY DAY TO GET SOME EXERCISE, BUT IT'S BEEN ICY OUTSIDE FOR SEVERAL DAYS. WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

- ☐ a) Go outside anyway, because you can't stand it anymore and you really feel you need some exercise.
- ☐ b) Decide to do some indoor exercises instead.
- ☐ c) Grumble about the weather, and then sit down and watch TV.

2. YOUR EAVESTROUGHS NEED TO BE CLEANED, BUT LAST TIME YOU GOT UP ON THE LADDER YOU FELT A LITTLE UNSTEADY. WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

- ☐ a) Do the chore anyway, because it's silly to pay someone to do something you've always done yourself every year.
- ☐ b) Have someone else do the job, thinking it will be worth it to yourself and your family if hiring someone can prevent a bad fall.
- ☐ c) Avoid doing the work or getting it done. Although it's fairly inexpensive, you may need the money later for a rainy day.



3. YOUR FRIEND HAS SIGNED UP FOR AN EXERCISE CLASS FOR SENIORS AND WANTS YOU TO JOIN TOO. WHAT DO YOU DO?

- ☐ a) Tell your friend you don't consider yourself a senior, and sign up for the POWER PUMP aerobics class at the local gym, even though you haven't had regular exercise for several years.
- ☐ b) Consult with your doctor and, if given the go-ahead, join the class, figuring that the exercise will do you some good.
- ☐ c) Refuse, because you don't want to strain yourself.

4. THE OTHER DAY YOU STUMBLED AND ALMOST FELL ON YOUR WAY TO THE CORNER STORE. WHAT DO YOU DO?

- ☐ a) Blame it on bad luck, and do everything the same as always, hoping you'll have better luck next time.
- ☐ b) Take steps to prevent a possible fall in the future, for example, by using a cane, wearing supportive footwear with good treads, paying attention to the pavement and reporting poor conditions, and so on.
- ☐ c) Cut down on the number of times you have to go outside, and generally try to walk less so that you won't fall.

5. YOU LIKE TO TRAVEL. YOU'RE PLANNING A TWO-WEEK TRIP, BUT YOU CAN ONLY MANAGE ONE BAG AND YOU HAVE QUITE A FEW DIFFERENT MEDICATIONS TO TAKE WITH YOU. WHAT DO YOU DO?

- ☐ **a)** Try to save space by placing several types of medication in one bottle, figuring that you can tell them all apart and that you'll remember the instructions.
- ☐ **b)** Bring all your medications with you, each one in its original, clearly labelled container.
- ☐ **c)** Decide that travelling with medications is too much trouble and that it's time you cut down on your travel.

6. YOU ARE HELPING OUT AT YOUR SENIORS' CENTRE BAZAAR, AND YOU NEED TO CARRY SOME LARGE BOXES OF SUPPLIES DOWN THE STAIRS. WHAT DO YOU DO?

- ☐ **a)** Carry the boxes down the stairs, even though you are a bit nervous about not having a hand free to hold the handrail.
- ☐ **b)** Ask if someone else can move the boxes and if there is another job you can help with.
- ☐ **c)** Decide that this is a sign you should stop doing volunteer work.

ANSWERS:

What did you most often circle: a, b or c? If you circled mostly a's, you should probably start thinking twice about the risks you are taking. Life is full of risks, but you don't want to set yourself up for an accident. If you circled mostly c's, you might be a little too cautious. You may be denying yourself valuable exercise and social contact or cutting back unnecessarily on your quality of life. If you circled mostly b's, you are familiar with how to take smart risks.

PERSONAL STORY: “It’s Never Too Late”

In Eleanor Mills’ opinion, it is “absolutely never too late” to start exercising. When she was 68 years old, Eleanor was almost bedridden and “barely able to teeter across a room”. When she was 81 years old, however, she was leading 5-km walks in cities across the country.

Eleanor has advanced osteoporosis, a disease in which the bones become so thin and brittle that they break easily. In 1979, several of her vertebrae collapsed, and three years later she suffered further fractures. “With the pain and agony and the lack of activity — because I could hardly do anything at all — I went down to 46 percent bone density. I really began to feel like a china cup walking around, because it really is about half the strength you should have.”

Eleanor knew that one of the best ways to improve her condition is to be active. She started challenging herself to walk a little bit each day. “I was in terribly bad shape,” she says. “I only kept going because I knew that if you keep still, you lose more bone than ever. It goes much faster.” Through exercise, good nutrition and medical treatment, Eleanor eventually increased her bone density by 20 percent.

A turning point came when Eleanor first tried a walker. “I simply flew along, and I said to myself, ‘Gee, I could walk to Vancouver with this’.” It was Eleanor’s idea to form what was called the “Boney Express”, a series of walks to raise money for, and awareness of, osteoporosis. Between 1993 and 1994, Eleanor led 5-km walks in 130 communities across the country.

Eleanor admits that when she first used the walker, she felt a little strange wondering what people would think. "There are many people who have resisted getting a walker because it sort of labelled them as unable. And I did feel a little odd pushing around what seemed like an empty chair, because my walker has a seat. But that is so much offset by the value of the walker, that I very soon got over it. I think, we should welcome all the aids we can find, and we must be proud that we can do so much more when we use them."

One of Eleanor's goals for next year is to try walking for the whole day. As she puts it, "I just want to see how far I can go."



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: “INVESTING IN YOURSELF”

Investing in yourself is in your best interest. Spending time and energy on your health and safety can provide a big pay-off in terms of how you feel. For example, becoming physically active is a guaranteed way to improve your general level of health and help you feel more energetic. Regular activity can also help cut down on your chances of having a fall or other home injury by helping you to maintain or improve your balance, strength and flexibility.



Here are some tips to start you thinking about “investments” you can make.

USE IT OR LOSE IT!

If you have ever seen an arm or a leg that has been in a cast for several weeks, you know how true this expression can be. Many experts believe that inactivity can lead to some heart problems, less flexibility in the joints and weaker muscles. Being physically active can also help people feel more positive about life and less likely to feel depressed.

becomes. Weight-bearing exercise is the best type. This is any type of physical activity that forces the body to carry its own weight, such as walking or dancing.

Stretching exercises can help relieve the pain of one of the most common forms of arthritis: osteoarthritis. Physical activity can help keep the muscles and tendons around the affected joint more flexible and strong.

Physical activity can also play an important role in preventing osteoporosis. The more “work” a bone has to do, the stronger it

Being active improves your quality of life. It can help you feel better, remain independent and enjoy life to its fullest.



Did You Know...?

Even when physical activity starts in later life — after a sedentary middle age —, it can lead to significant improvements in health. People who are active can maintain the ability to carry out their day-to-day activities and feel more energetic, too. Some seniors maintain the same energy level they had when they were 15 to 20 years younger.

It has been shown that appropriate physical activity can also help very frail seniors recover their physical and emotional strength to a remarkable extent — even at a very advanced age.



BEING ACTIVE

Being active includes everyday activities, such as walking, climbing stairs, gardening and shopping, as well as traditional exercise classes and sports, such as golf, tennis and swimming. Weight lifting specifically designed for seniors is proving to be a popular and beneficial form of exercise.

Physical activity will benefit all seniors, but the type of activities should be based on an individual's interests, health status and current level of activity. The best thing you can do for your health is to start moving. Check with your doctor, and start slowly.

THE BENEFITS OF BEING ACTIVE

- more mobile joints
- stronger bones and muscles
- better heart and lung function
- decreased risk of heart disease, diabetes, some cancers (colon) and high blood pressure
- improved digestion, less incidence of constipation
- more energy, less fatigue
- better sleep
- less anxiety and depression, better ability to cope with stress
- opportunities to socialize with others

CONTACT

If you want more information on being active, contact:

1) **ParticipACTION**

41 Dundas Street West
Box 64, Suite 220
Toronto, Ontario M5G 2C2
Tel: (416) 954-1212
Fax: (416) 954-4949

OR

253 McGill College Avenue
Room 332
Montreal, Quebec H3B 2Y5
Tel: (514) 876-4411
Fax: (514) 876-1895

Contact ParticipACTION for information on active living programs.

2) **Canadian Red Cross Society**

Link to Health
5700 CanCross Court
Mississauga, Ontario L5R 9R9
Tel: 1-800-549-9799

Order the publication **Active Living Guide** available in English for \$15.00. Also enquire about Link to Health, an active living program for seniors.

3) **KINO-Québec**

20, rue Chauveau
Bloc A, Rez-de-chausée
Québec, Québec G1R 4J3
Tel: (418) 691-2077
Fax: (418) 528-1652

Contact KINO-Québec for information on Viactive, an awareness program for motivating seniors to become physically active.

4) **Canadian Public Health Association**

1565 Carling Avenue, Suite 400
Ottawa, Ontario K1Z 8R1
Tel: (613) 725-3769
Fax: (613) 725-9826

Order the video **Moving to Live** for a cost of \$19.95 (available in English only).

5) **Human Kinetics Canada**

474 Devonshire Road, Suite 100
Windsor, Ontario N8Y 2L5
Tel: 1-800-465-7301
Fax: (519) 971-9797

Order the book **Active Living** at the cost of \$19.95 (available in English only).

6) **Osteoporosis Society of Canada**

Box 280, Station Q
Toronto, Ontario M4T 2M1
Tel: 1-800-463-6842
Fax: (416) 696-2673

Call for the free pamphlet **Building Better Bones: A Guide to Active Living** (available in French and English) as well as for information on osteoporosis and related issues.

7) **General Store Publishing House**

1 Main Street
Burnstown, Ontario K0J 1G0
Tel: 1-800-465-6072
Fax: (613) 432-7184

Order the book **Healthy Happy Aging** for a cost of \$20.00 (available in English, French and Spanish).

PERSONAL STORY: “Keeping Track”

Margaret Deschamps believes in being on top of the medications she is taking. One of her friends suffered from an accidental overdose of medication, because she had gone to two different doctors and was prescribed two different drugs with similar ingredients. Margaret has always been careful about her medicine, and this made her even more so.

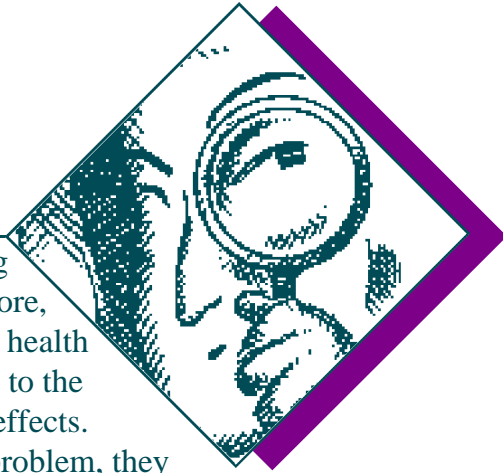
“I want to know the ins and outs of what I’m taking and what it’s for. There’s no reason to be afraid: you ask, and you get an answer. When you go to the drug store, they’ll mark everything down for you [about your medication], the side effects and all. They’ll check if you’re taking medication from another doctor.”

As Margaret explains, you can often have several doctors — “a general practitioner, a heart specialist, a rheumatologist, all these doctors — and one doesn’t always know what the other ones are giving you. But if you go to the same drug store, and you’re prescribed something that, along with your other medication, could cause an adverse reaction or an overdose, they can let you know. They can contact the doctors, if necessary. This is a marvellous service that many drug stores offer now.”



MEDICATIONS:

“MINDING YOUR MEDICINE”



Seniors may be more prone to illness due to the weakening of the body's natural defences. It is not surprising, therefore, that many require a greater number of drugs to treat their health problems. Nevertheless, the aging body is more sensitive to the effects of many medications, including undesirable side effects. Because seniors also tend to have more than one health problem, they may receive multiple prescriptions or they may combine prescription drugs with over-the-counter products or with natural remedies. The combinations can cancel the benefits of any or all medications and produce adverse reactions, such as memory loss, sleepiness, agitation and confusion. These effects have been associated with falls and other injuries.

Drugs and alcohol don't mix. Alcohol can react with many common medications including tranquilizers, sleeping pills, cold or allergy medicines, high blood pressure pills and pain medication. Mixing alcohol and medications may cause these feelings or symptoms: dizziness, fainting, confusion, drowsiness and poor coordination. These symptoms increase your risk of falls and other injuries.



TIP

IF YOU HAVE TO TAKE MEDICATION, FOLLOW THIS GENERAL ADVICE:

- Talk to your health care professional about alternatives to medication. Medication may not always be the best solution.
- Tell **all** your doctors and your pharmacist about **all** of the medicine you are taking, prescription, over-the-counter or herbal, as well as your use of alcohol.
- If you react to a medicine or experience side effects, tell your doctor or pharmacist. Your doctor may adjust the dosage.
- When you get a new medicine, ask these questions and make sure you understand the answers.
 1. What is the name of the medication and what does it do?
 2. How and when do I take it?
 3. Are there any side effects and what should I do if I get any?
 4. What food, drinks or other medicine should I avoid when I take this medicine?
 5. Do you have any written information about the medicine?

CONTACT

For more information on the use of medicine, contact:

1) **Addiction Research Foundation**

33 Russell Street
Toronto, Ontario M5S 2S1
Tel: (416) 595-6111
1-800-661-1111
(to order publications - Ontario only)
1-800-463-6273
(for addiction services)
Fax: (416) 593-4694

Call for the free pamphlets, **The Older Adult and Alcohol** and **The Older Adult and Sleeping Pills, Tranquilizers and Pain Medications** (both pamphlets are available in French, English, Chinese, German, Greek, Italian and Portuguese). Also call for information or help for addictions.

2) **National Advisory Council on Aging**

473 Albert Street, 3rd floor
Postal Locator 4203 A
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0K9
Tel: (613) 957-1968
Fax: (613) 957-9938

Ask for the free publication **Expression**, volume 6, number 5, which has the article "The Right Medicine: A Balancing Act" (available in English and French).

3) **Seniors Advisory Council for the Region of Sudbury**

Elm Town Square
43 Elm Street, Unit 37
Sudbury, Ontario P3C 1S4
Tel: (705) 671-1647
Fax: (705) 671-2479

Ask for the free publication **Older Adults and Medicine — Ask Questions: There May Be Alternatives** (available in English and French).

4) **Division of Aging and Seniors**

Health Canada
473 Albert Street, 3rd floor
Postal Locator 4203 A
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0K9
Tel: (613) 952-7606
Fax: (613) 957-7627

Ask for the free publication **Seniors Info Exchange**, Winter 1996-97, which is dedicated to seniors and medication use.

Visit the Seniors Medication and Alcohol Use Internet site at:
<http://www.hwc.ca/datahpsb/seniors/index.htm>

5) **Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association of Canada**

302-1111 Prince of Wales Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K2C 3T2
Tel: (613) 727-1380
1-800-363-0203
Fax: (613) 727-1407

Order the free publication **Knowledge is the Best Medicine**, which contains information on medications as well as a medication record for keeping track of your drugs (available in English and French).

6) **Your local bookstore** to purchase the Canadian Medical Association's **Guide to Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drugs** at the price of \$39.95 (available in English and French).

FACT SHEET:

"JUST THE FACTS — SENIORS AND INJURY IN CANADA"



THE AGING POPULATION

In 1993, approximately 3.4 million Canadians were over the age of 65 — nearly 12% of Canada's population.

The number of seniors in the Canadian population is increasing and will likely be over 6 million by the year 2021. By 2041, it is expected that there will be more than 8 million Canadian seniors — that is one in every four Canadians.

INJURY AMONG THE AGING POPULATION

Falls

According to the 1994 National Population Health Survey, falls were the leading cause of injury for Canadians 65 years of age and over.

At least one third of people aged 65 and over will experience at least one fall during the year.

A large proportion of injury-related deaths among Canadians 65 years and over are the result of falls; the likelihood of dying from a fall-related injury increases with age.

Home Injuries

Injuries in the home increase with age.

According to the 1994 National Population Health Survey, seniors were more likely to experience an injury in the home or surrounding area than in any other location.

Over one quarter of all home injuries reported by senior consumers were related to products or equipment they were using.

Hospitalization

The rate of hospitalization for injuries increases with age.

Seniors aged 65 and over account for more than 25% of all cases of hospitalization due to injury. During 1990-91, of the 297 074 individuals hospitalized due to an injury, almost 25.9% (76 854) were over the age of 65.

Recovery Time

The risk of having an accident in the home is smaller for seniors than for individuals aged 15 to 24. However, the number of days of activity lost from home injuries is much higher for seniors.

Recovery time for all types of illnesses, including injuries, is slower for seniors than for the rest of the population. On average, a person under the age of 44 takes 6.1 days to recover from an injury, compared to 16.2 days for seniors aged 65 to 74 and 25.3 days for seniors 75 years and over.

HEALTH CARE COSTS INCURRED AS A RESULT OF INJURY

In 1993, injury-related expenditures for all of Canada were estimated to be approximately \$14 billion. This includes both direct and indirect costs such as hospital care, physician care, drugs, research, premature mortality, and long- and short-term disability.

The cost of injury-related expenditures for seniors aged 65 and over was approximately \$2 billion. However, this figure excludes certain cost components which could not be broken down by age groups, such as research and care in institutions other than hospitals.

SOURCES:

Annual Demographic Statistics, 1994. Statistics Canada. March 1995.

Moore, R., Mao, Y., Zhang, J. and Clarke, K. **Economic Burden of Illness in Canada, 1993.** Health Canada. In Press. (Canadian Public Health Association).

Population Projections for Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1991-2016. Statistics Canada. December 1994.

Raina, P. and Torrence, V. **Injury Mortality and Morbidity in Canadian Seniors, 1979-1991.** An internal report prepared for the Division of Aging and Seniors, Health Canada. 1996.

Raina, P. Unpublished tables based on the 1994 National Population Health Survey 1996.

Tait, H. **Injuries and Seniors: The Canadian Context.** Product Safety Branch [Health Canada]. March 1993.

RESOURCES:

“CHECKING COMMUNITY RESOURCES”



Many communities across Canada are working to improve home safety for seniors, and to help seniors live healthy, active lives. Here's a list of organizations you can use as a starting point to find out more about what's going on in your area. Not all the organizations listed will apply to everyone. In rural or remote areas the best way to find out what is happening will be to talk directly with your local municipality, community leaders or health professionals.

Federal/Provincial/Territorial Governments can provide information on their specific programs and resources for seniors. Check the blue pages in your phone book. You may also call Reference Canada, a referral and basic information service on federal government programs and services, at 1-800-667-3355 or 1-800-465-7735 (TDD). In Manitoba and Quebec, Reference Canada has a joint program with the province. In Manitoba, call the Citizen's Inquiry Service at 1-800-282-8060. In Quebec, call Communication Québec at 1-800-363-1363.

Municipal Governments can provide information on programs to prevent falls and home injuries, recreation and exercise programs for seniors, nutrition, community health initiatives and other local issues.

Local Police and Fire Departments can provide information on fire safety, smoke alarms and how to test them, and the correct way to store chemicals and other materials. In some communities, police and fire departments will arrange for home safety checks.

Pharmacies can provide information on medications, their side effects, the way they should be taken, and the correct way to dispose of unused medications.

Public Health Offices and Community Health Centres can provide information on fall and injury prevention, nutrition, medication use and other issues about living independently.

Ethno-cultural Organizations may provide services to seniors in their own language or information on programs for seniors.

Senior Citizens' Organizations can provide information on recreation and exercise programs, injury prevention materials, social activities, and other services for seniors available in the community.

Local Libraries may help you access documents and information that you require.

Local Chapters of voluntary organizations can help you cope with many health problems and illnesses, for example, Arthritis Society, Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, Parkinson's Society, Canadian Hearing Society.

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RESOURCES:

“NATIONAL SOURCES”

Addiction Research Foundation

33 Russell Street
Toronto, Ontario M5S 2S1
Tel: 1-800-661-1111
Fax: (416) 593-4694

- publications on the older adult and sleeping pills, tranquilizers and pain medications.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

The Canadian Housing Information Centre
700 Montreal Road
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0P7
Tel: 1-800-668-2642
Fax: (613) 748-4069

- publications on home adaptations for seniors, safety and security services, and other housing information.

Canada Safety Council

1020 Thomas Spratt Place
Ottawa, Ontario K1G 5L5
Tel: (613) 739-1535
Fax: (613) 739-1566

- safety education materials, product information for seniors, information on National Seniors' Safety Week, and contact numbers for provincial safety leagues.

Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists

1125 Colonel By Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5R1
Tel: (613) 523-2268
Fax: (613) 523-2552

- information on home modification and ways to make everyday tasks more simple.

Division of Aging and Seniors

Health Canada
473 Albert Street, 3rd floor
Postal Locator: 4203A
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0K9
Tel: (613) 952-7606
Fax: (613) 957-7627

- information on programs and services for seniors.

National Advisory Council on Aging

473 Albert Street, 3rd floor
Postal Locator: 4203A
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0K9
Tel: (613) 957-1968
Fax: (613) 957-7627

- information and publications on seniors' issues.

Product Safety Bureau

Health Canada
Main Statistics Canada Building
Wing 1000
Address Locator: 0301B2
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0K9
Tel: (613) 952-1014
Fax: (613) 952-1994

- information and publications on injury data, the safe handling and design of products.

Standards Council of Canada

45 O'Connor Street
Suite 1200
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 6N7

Tel: (613) 238-3222
Fax: (613) 995-4564

- information on national, foreign and international standards relating to product safety.

NATIONAL SENIORS ORGANIZATIONS**Assemblée des aînés et aînées francophones du Canada**

1, rue Nicholas
Pièce 1404
Ottawa, Ontario
K1N 7B7

Tel: (613) 241-7600
Fax: (613) 241-6046

Canadian Association of Retired Persons

27 Queen Street East
Suite 1304
Toronto, Ontario
M5C 2M6
Tel: (416) 363-8748
Fax: (416) 363-8747

Canadian Pensioners Concerned Inc.

National Office
7071 Bayers Road
Suite 316
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3L 2C2
Tel: (902) 455-7684
Fax: (902) 455-1825

Congress of Union Retirees of Canada (CURC)

3151 Bridletowne Circle, #1206
Scarborough, Ontario
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Tel: (416) 251-7042
Fax: (416) 252-5770

Federal Superannuates National Association

233 Gilmour Street
Suite 401
Ottawa, Ontario
K2P 0P2

Tel: (613) 234-9663
Fax: (613) 234-2314

National Pensioners and Senior Citizens Federation

3033 Lakeshore Boulevard West
Toronto, Ontario
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Tel: (416) 251-7042
Fax: (416) 252-5770

One Voice – The Canadian Seniors Network

350 Sparks Street
Suite 1005
Ottawa, Ontario
K1R 7S8

Tel: (613) 238-7624
Fax: (613) 235-2674

Royal Canadian Legion

Dominion Command (National Office)
359 Kent Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K2P 0R7

Tel: (613) 235-4391
Fax: (613) 563-1670

RESOURCES:

"PUBLICATIONS AND VIDEOS"

For further information on subjects related to home injury prevention and older adults, please consult the following.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. **Maintaining Seniors' Independence through Home Adaptations.** (video, 34 minutes, \$9.99)

Health Canada, Division of Aging and Seniors. **Seniors' Guide to Federal Programs and Services.** Ottawa: the Division, 1996.

Health Canada, Product Safety Bureau. **Product Safety and our Aging Society: Design Considerations for Manufacturers and Designers.** Ottawa: the Bureau, 1993.

Human Resources Development Canada. **Aids to Independent Living: Breaking through the Barriers.** Ottawa: the Department, 1995. (1-800-665-9017).

Human Resources Development Canada. **Tips, Tools, and Techniques. Home Maintenance and Hobbycraft. People with Disabilities and Seniors.** Ottawa: the Department, 1995.

National Advisory Council on Aging. **Housing an Aging Population: Guidelines for Development and Design.** Ottawa: the Council, 1992.

National Advisory Council on Aging. **Living with Sensory Loss. Writings in Gerontology No. 8.** Ottawa: the Council, 1990.

Seven Oaks General Hospital. **Safety Pamphlets** [bedroom; bathroom; kitchen; outside; stairs and entrances; fire; general home safety]. Winnipeg: the Hospital, 1994. (204-632-3153)
Pamphlets in French and English are available from the Ottawa General Hospital. (613-737-1304).



Our mission is to help the people of Canada
maintain and improve their health.
Health Canada

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Chez soi en toute sécurité — Guide de sécurité domestique à l'intention des personnes âgées.

This publication is available on Internet. This publication can be made available upon request in/on computer diskette/large print, please call the Division of Aging and Seniors.