

Alzheimer's San Diego

Home Safety Checklist



Don't wait until there's a crisis.

This checklist is designed to create a safer environment in the household. Removing hazards or other dangerous items can reduce hospital visits, prolong one's ability to remain in the home, and minimize crisis. If safety is a concern or home safety supplies are needed, please ask to speak with one of our Clinical Care Coaches who can give you more recommendations for your specific circumstances.

Some of these items listed are free, while others involve higher costs. This is just a guide of suggestions, do what best serves your person and your situation!

1 Throughout the home

- Free walkways and stairs of clutter and cords. Secure any throw rugs with sticky backing or remove entirely. Installing handrails might help assist with balance.
- Check all rooms, walkways, and stairs for adequate lighting. Consider adding motion sensor lighting.
- Mark edges of steps/stairs with brightly colored tape so they are clearly visible.
- Have an extra set of house, car, and bedroom/bathroom door keys, in case they are misplaced.
- Keep emergency phone numbers and the address of the house in addition to landlines. Label at least one person as "In Case of Emergency (ICE)".
- Ensure that all smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in the rooms are working.
- Store away poisonous or hazardous substances and cleaning products.
- Remove any household items that could cause injury such as scissors, knives, power tools, and machinery. Avoid having these items out on display.
- Secure any guns and other weapons in a safe location or remove them from the home.
- Store medications in a secured area if supervision when taking medication is needed.
- Install no-step, no-trip thresholds at doorways.

2 Bathroom

- Install grab bars near shower, bathtub, and toilet. Consider using a raised toilet seat.
- Use a non-skid bath mat and non-slip surface/mat in bathtub or shower.
- Lower the water heater temperature to 120 degrees to prevent burns or scalding.
- Use a shower chair/transfer bench to minimize risk of falling
- Install an adjustable height or handheld showerhead.
- Keep medications and cleaning supplies in a safe place.
- Consider removing internal locks to avoid a person accidentally locking themselves in.

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3 Bedroom

- Have transfer devices or portable toilets in close proximity.
- Consider using risers to elevate the bed to make it easier to get in and out of.
- Place the phone and important phone numbers near the bedside for emergencies.
- Secure electric blankets, portable heaters, and heating pads.

4 Being alone

Individuals living with mild memory impairments can often live and be left alone safely. However, at some point it will become necessary to have someone with the person at all times in order to prevent injury or harm. Planning ahead and preventing injury can extend the person's independence. If any of the changes listed become apparent, it's a good idea to plan for more supervision, support, or a change in living situation.

It has become challenging to:

- Take medications successfully and safely
- Grocery shop, prepare meals, pay bills, maintain household cleanliness and home repairs
- Use the telephone, television, or other technology
- Remember the current phone number or home address
- Remember to extinguish cigarettes, turn off burners or oven, lock or secure the home
- Eat well-balanced meals and drink appropriate amounts of water
- Judge the appropriate temperature for getting dressed or using the thermostat

The person experiences:

- Feeling worried, anxious, isolated, and lonely
- Being the victim of fraud, telemarketers, or a crime
- Becoming lost or is often disoriented
- Weight loss or gains and/or their pets have weight loss or gains

Other signs:

- The person calls others constantly or the police are being called by the neighbors
- Items are missing around the home
- The person has mysterious bruises, scratches, or unusual marks
- The person gets locked out of the home frequently
- Personal care/hygiene is neglected, the person wears the same clothing all the time
- The vehicle has new dents or scratches

Alzheimer's San Diego has created special programs for safety like VITALZ, specifically for people with dementia living alone and Take Me Home, for wandering prevention. For more information about these programs please contact us at 858.492.4400.