

Jewish Tradition Home Care

PATIENT SAFETY

BOOKLET

“Preventing Accidents in Your Home”

The most common and dangerous causes of injury are.....

FALLS

There are measures you can take to reduce the risk of falls in your home.

- ▶ **Remove scatter rugs or use non-skid tape or backing on throw rugs.
Tack down the edges of all carpets.**
- ▶ **Never leave articles around beds, stairs, or in hallways.**
- ▶ **Don't use a doorway, halls or stairs for storage.**
- ▶ **Keep pathways clear of furniture, electric cords, space heaters, etc.**
- ▶ **Don't rush when climbing up or down stairs.**
- ▶ **Stairs should have non-skid treads and a solid, easy to grasp handrail.**
- ▶ **If you must climb use a solid step stool or ladder rather than a chair or box.**

When carrying objects, make sure you:

- ▶ **Can see.**
- ▶ **Get a firm grip.**
- ▶ **Move slowly and evenly.**
- ▶ **Lift with your legs (knees bent, back straight).**
- ▶ **Ask for help with heavy or awkward objects.**

GENERAL SAFETY TIPS

- √ Avoid wearing only socks, smooth-soled shoes or slippers on non-carpeted floors.
- √ Avoid wet floors-wipe all spills up immediately.
- √ Keep kitchen floor free of grease and scraps.
- √ Household pets should be kept under control and out of pathways.

In the bathroom:

- ▶ Be sure mats are non-skid and there are treads in the tub or shower to prevent slips.
- ▶ Install “grab bars.” Towel racks should not be used as grab bars as they are not secure enough to support body weight.

ADEQUATE LIGHTING WILL HELP PREVENT ACCIDENTS...

- ▶ Keep a lamp near the bed so you will not have to get up in the dark.
- ▶ Keep a night light in the bathroom.
- ▶ Keep a flashlight handy in case of power failure.
- ▶ Post emergency numbers by your telephone.
- ▶ If you live alone, ask a neighbor, friend or family member to check on you each day.
- ▶ Take your time and do things slowly. Be safe, don't hurry--you will decrease your chance of an accident.
- ▶ To avoid dizziness, get out of your bed or your chair slowly
- ▶ Because of frequent power outages, keep a flashlight and portable radio handy. Keep extra batteries on hand.

MEDICATIONS ARE MEANT TO HELP...TAKE THEM SAFELY.

- * Use caution and be aware of what you are taking.
- * Tell your physician, pharmacist, and nurse about all the medications you are taking (prescription and over the counter) to prevent dangerous combinations or duplication.
- * Take a list to the doctor on each visit.
- * Read your medication labels and take as directed.
- * Always take the exact dosage prescribed.
- * Take at the times indicated.
- * If you miss a dose, don't double your next dose.
- * Always keep medication in the original container and out of the reach of children.
- * Organize your containers in one area.
- * Discard any expired medications or those that have been discontinued by your doctor. They should have been flushed down the toilet.
- * Never take another person's medication.
- * Be aware of the precautions on the label. Some drugs do not mix with alcohol or certain foods.

Your nurse will tell you what each drug is for, how to take it and the side effects you need to be aware of. She will assist you with setting up a safe system for taking your medications, if necessary. You can use a chart or container system to help you remember what medications to take, how much to take and when to take it.

PREVENTING INFECTIONS AT HOME

Hand washing is the single most important means of preventing the spread of infections.

WHEN SHOULD HANDS BE WASHED?

Before: *preparing food *eating food
 *serving food *handling an infant or sick person

After: *using the toilet *blowing or wiping nose
 *handling soiled materials *handling anyone with a cold, flu or other infection

HOW SHOULD HANDS BE WASHED?

The three most important elements of Good Hand washing are LOTS OF:

- 1) Warm water
- 2) Soap
- 3) Friction

Good Hand washing technique is illustrated below.

Wet hands with plenty of warm water and soap (liquid anti-microbial is best). Work up a lather over both hands and wrists.

Rub the palm of one hand over the back of the other several times. Repeat for the other hand. Interlace fingers of both hands and rub back and forth.

Clean under the fingers with a nail brush or stick. Rinse hands/wrists thoroughly under warm running water while holding hands down.

Dry hands well with a paper towel or a clean hand towel.