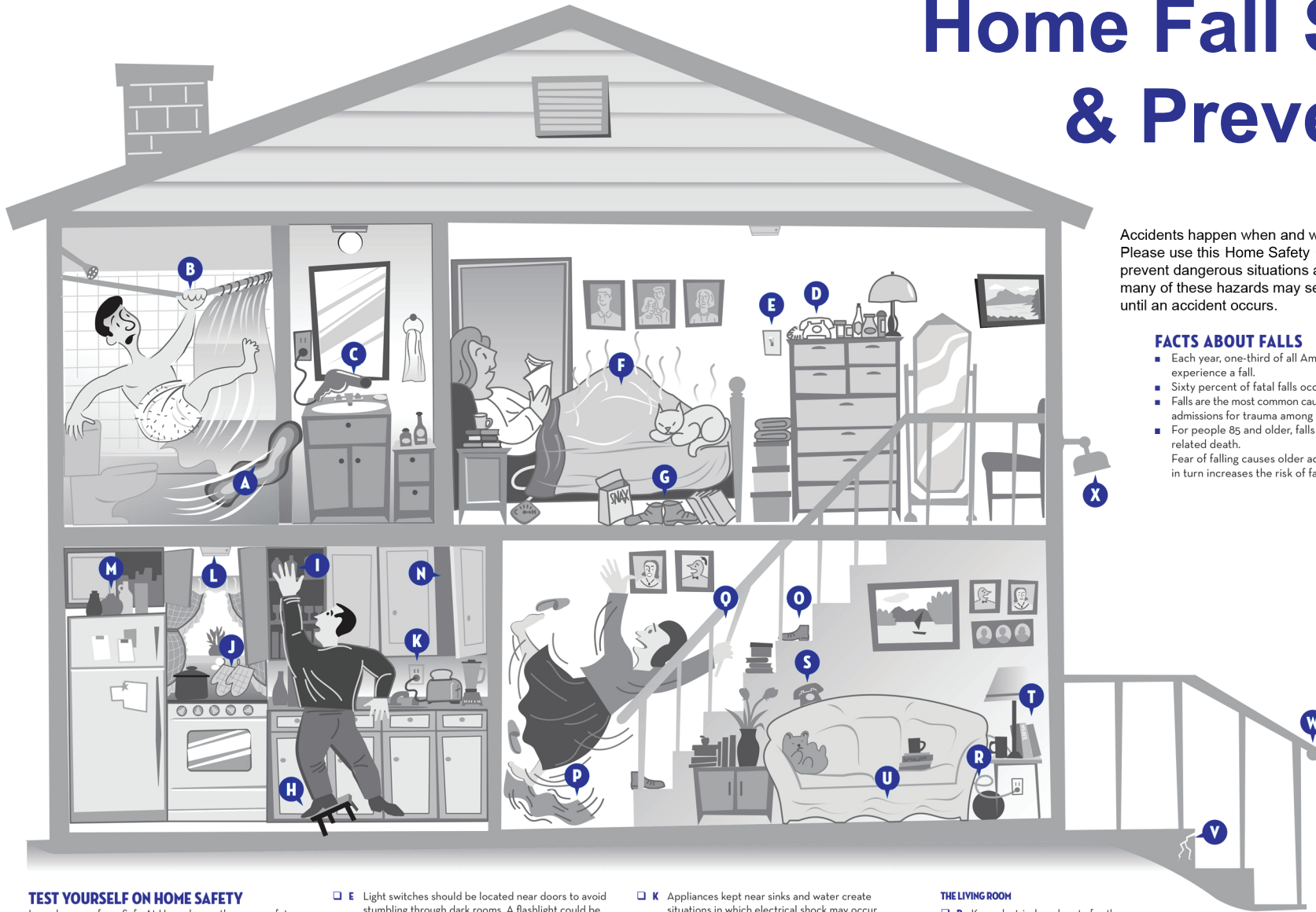


# Home Fall Safety & Prevention



Accidents happen when and where we are least expecting them. Please use this Home Safety Checklist to help avoid and prevent dangerous situations and accidents. Use a keen eye, many of these hazards may seem obvious, but can go unnoticed until an accident occurs.

## FACTS ABOUT FALLS

- Each year, one-third of all Americans age 65 and older experience a fall.
- Sixty percent of fatal falls occur in the home.
- Falls are the most common cause of injuries and hospital admissions for trauma among older adults.
- For people 85 and older, falls are the leading cause of injury-related death. Fear of falling causes older adults to limit their activity, which in turn increases the risk of falling.

## TEST YOURSELF ON HOME SAFETY

In each room of our Safe At Home house there are safety problems. Match them up with the following:

### THE BATHROOM

- A** Scatter rugs and towels cause slips and falls when used as mats in the bathroom.
- B** A curtain rod (or soap dish, shower nozzle, etc.) is unsafe when used as a stabilizing handle; instead, install a secure grab bar at the edge of the tub and along the back wall. Also add grab bars for the toilet.
- C** Hair dryers and other appliances located too close to water create the possibility for electrical shock.

### THE BEDROOM

- D** Telephones should be located close to the bed in the event of an emergency.

- E** Light switches should be located near doors to avoid stumbling through dark rooms. A flashlight could be kept by the bed.
- F** Pets, books and other objects left on top of electrical blankets cause overheating and create a potential fire hazard.
- G** Shoes, clothing and other objects left near the bedside are easy to trip over.

### THE KITCHEN

- H** Use sturdy, safety-approved step stools when trying to reach objects on higher shelves - and never stretch on one foot to reach objects.
- I** Store commonly used items in easy-to-reach areas - not on high shelves.
- J** Potholders, curtains and other cloth objects create a severe fire hazard when located over or near a stovetop.

- K** Appliances kept near sinks and water create situations in which electrical shock may occur.
- L** Smoke alarms should be in every kitchen and kept up to date with fresh batteries. Fire extinguishers should also be kept current.
- M** Objects kept on top of refrigerators and freezers easily topple over when the doors are opened.
- N** Fasteners attached to cabinets keep doors from swinging open when not in use.

### THE STAIRS

- O** Clutter - such as boxes, shoes, books - are easy to trip over when left on the stairs.
- P** To avoid slips and falls, securely fasten scatter rugs to the floor.
- Q** Stair railings must be checked regularly for sturdiness.

### THE LIVING ROOM

- R** Keep electrical cords out of pathways.
- S** Keep telephones in easy-to-reach areas, and emergency phone numbers nearby.
- T** Space your furniture to allow for clear pathways.
- U** Aging furniture that is too soft or sags makes it extremely difficult to get off a chair or couch.

### THE FRONT PORCH

- V** Stumbles and falls occur when cement on steps is cracked and crumbling.
- W** Railings should reach one foot beyond the top and bottom step of the porch.
- X** Keep your entryway and porch well lit.



**Bellevue  
Healthcare**

### **Equipment for Safety and Fall Prevention:**

The products listed are designed help to keep people safer and prevent falls. You may have seen some of them during a hospital or nursing facility stay. The choice of product is dependent on your needs. Many of these products are available to demo at your local Bellevue Healthcare location. You can also contact your local Bellevue Healthcare office by phone, or visit our website for more details on the equipment available.

### **Sensor Pad Alarms – to alert caregivers:**

- Bed (alerts when getting up).
- Floor (alerts when stepped on).
- Chair (alerts when standing up).
- Cord (alerts when cord is pulled loose from alarm box).

### **Devices to keep a person safe while sitting in a chair:**

- Wedge Foam Cushions.
- Pommel Cushions.
- Self-Release Seat Belts.
- Hugger Cushions.

### **Equipment to keep a person safe in bed:**

- Bed Rails.
- Alarm Pads.
- Bolster Pads.
- Fall Mats.

### **Equipment to keep a person safe in the bathroom:**

- Transfer Benches.
- Rails.
- Grab Bars.
- Raised Toilet Seats

## **Fall Prevention in Your Home and Community:**

You can prevent many falls by being aware of the reasons you may fall. Most falls are caused by health and aging changes, or home and community hazards.

### **To deal with health and aging changes:**

- Have your hearing tested. (Ear problems can affect your balance.)
- Have your eyes tested. (Inability to see hazards and read instructions can affect your safety.)
- Exercise regularly. (Improves your balance and flexibility.)
- Review medications with your doctor or pharmacist to know the reason for taking them and what side effects to be aware of. (Some medications can make you dizzy, sleepy or unsteady.)
- Wear solid, well-fitting shoes. (Poor fitting or slippery shoes can cause falls and foot problems.)

### **To prevent or avoid unsafe situations and hazards at home or in your community:**

- Stay on pathways.
- Remove clutter and area rugs that are not secured.
- Install grab bars in bathrooms.
- Provide good lighting for stairs, hallways and outdoor areas.

**CONTACT YOUR LOCAL  
BELLEVUE HEALTHCARE OFFICE:  
(866) 451-2842**

