

Welcome to our Newsletter!

Welcome to the Heritage Senior Care Inc. Newsletter, we are so excited to share this newsletter with our senior clients, their families and the community.

Heritage Senior Care Inc. has been serving the needs of seniors for over 35 years. Our mission is to help seniors who wish to remain in their homes, but may require assistance with activities of daily life, transportation and companionship.



A prime example of safety in the bathroom, note the commode that fits easily over the toilet, while safely ambulating with the use of a cane.

Retrieved from:

<https://dailycaring.com/safety-tips-elderly-toilet-use/>

Hot Topics: Home Safety for Seniors

When providing home-care for our senior clients at Heritage Senior Care Inc. we first must identify if the home is a safe environment. For example: If our client was in a motorized wheelchair, 'Are the doors wide enough to accommodate the wheelchair? 'Is there a ramp installed outside the entryway?' In the example of a client who has issues ambulating in their restroom, 'Are supportive devices such as grab bars, a heightened toilet seat or shower-chair installed?' Aging in Place continues to be a trending topic as seniors are opting to live out their years at home, however to do so safely may involve some home modifications.

According to a study published by the National institute on Aging, for those over the age of 65, it is estimated that over two thirds of falls occurred in the bathroom, 81% of these injuries are caused by slip and falls. For this reason, it is often recommended to get a heightened toilet seat, some toilets are very low to the ground and can contribute to an accident. Grab Bars and perhaps even a shower-chair can also assist in providing a safe bathroom for your loved one. Ideally, these preventative measures could be implemented before an accident occurred- here are some helpful TIPS to identify if the home is truly safe enough to 'Age in Place.'

TIPS—

- Make sure there is safe/ accessible pathways to and from the bathroom and kitchen- hallways are clear and free of clutter.
- Rugs can be dangerous – especially on slick surfaces such as tile or wood paneling- when you notice the edges curling up, remove rugs promptly as they can contribute to 45.8% of falls- (retrieved from a 2013 study published by The Journal of Injury and Violence).
- Modified entryway/ exit--- Some seniors may find it difficult to navigate stairsteps near the front door/ main entry—some clients have alleviated this situation by only entering and exiting where it is flat and accessible such as walking through the Garage, safely navigating to the car.

Beware of Dim Lighting: We have all had it happen, the lightbulb went out- we intended to fix it, but we still haven't replaced it. For a senior living in their home, especially by themselves, this is NOT an option, the walkways to and from the bathroom MUST always be well lit. Motion sensor lights can help in temporarily lighting up the area, when you are in the room and shutting off automatically when you are not. If your loved one is having issues safely navigating to and from the bathroom- options exist such as a bedside commode that can help prevent an accident such a fall from occurring.



Pictured above is a customized ramp, placed over existing stairs, that accommodates a motorized wheelchair. Retrieved from: <https://101mobility.com>

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TIP: For assistance with acquiring a bedside commode, Heightened toilet seat or grab bars among many other options available. Please raise these questions is on the next trip to your Primary Physician. Your doctor can connect you to many of these items at little or even no cost- if you meet eligibility requirements.

Example if you are a recipient of Medicare Part B- you may be eligible for a bedside commode, but not the installation of a grab bar. While those on Medicaid (Medical in California) are entitled to have one grab bar installed in the bathroom. When in doubt, ask your healthcare professional or Insurance representative about low cost modification options. Also, as an added safety tip- make sure to only work with a licensed contractor/ outfit that can help with the installation of such items.

FYI for VETS: **If you or your spouse is a Veteran many options exist that can help families acquire safety equipment- such as grab bars, assistive devices such as: a cane, walker or wheelchair or even discounted incontinence supplies- please consult your primary doctor/ VA doctor or Social Worker for more information. **

For More Information and additional resources that discuss how to create a Safe Home for Seniors, please visit:

<https://www.nsc.org/home-safety/safety-topics/older-adult-falls>

<https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/701.pdf>

<https://medicare.com/coverage/does-medicare-cover-bathroom-safety-devices/>

Rosen T, Mack KA, Noonan RK. Slipping and tripping: fall injuries in adults associated with rugs and carpets. *J Inj Violence Res.* 2013;5(1):61-9.

“Safety doesn’t happen by accident”

- Author Unknown



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