



HOME MODIFICATION

Introduction

About half of all falls happen at home. The home – whether a single family dwelling, an apartment, or a mobile home – is where many older adults spend most of their time. Home modification can reduce the chances of falling at home.

Home modification refers to adapting or converting the physical environment to make performing tasks easier and reduce accidents. It includes removing hazards, adding grab bars or other assistive devices, changing how/where activities occur so as to minimize risks, and renovating or changing the structure to accommodate a disability.

Here are some everyday situations that pose risks for falls, and some possible solutions:

1. Lack of support in the bathroom/shower.

Solution: Install grab bars and use non-slip mats or non-skid strips.

2. Lack of support in the toilet.

Solution: Install grab bars or use raised toilet seat.

3. Climbing stairs.

Solution: Install handrails on both sides of the stairs.

4. Dark passage or stairway.

Solution: Install brighter lights, and have switches at both ends.

5. Objects in the way; such as books, clothes, newspapers, and shoes.

Solution: Remove them from the pathway.

6. Slippery rugs.

Solution: Remove or use double-sided tape to secure them to the floor.

7. Items out of reach.

Solution: Keep ones most often used at levels that can be reached easily.

Additional Information

For more information, contact the Program Office at (213)740-1364, email info@stopfalls.org, or visit www.stopfalls.org

This fact sheet comes to you from the Fall Prevention Center of Excellence, a project supported by the Archstone Foundation. The Program Office is located at the University of Southern California Andrus Gerontology Center. Other members of the Center of Excellence are: the California State University at Fullerton, the Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center at the Veterans Administration Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System, the University of California at Los Angeles, and the State of California Department of Health Services.