

# Living Well with Dementia

## Caregiver Tips on Home Safety



### Home Safety Checklist

- Is access to the home safe?
  - Are the steps in good condition?
  - Should there be a ramp?
  - Are the appropriate rails installed?
- Is the house decluttered and lit well enough for someone to safely move around?
  - Are there rugs that could be tripped over?
  - Are there lights in every hall?
  - Is the furniture arranged appropriately to prevent trips or falls?
- Is the kitchen safe?
  - Can timers be placed on appliances to prevent them from being used?
  - Are poisonous materials kept in an area that are not easily accessible?
  - Are items that are typically used (plates, bowls, glasses, silverware) in an easily accessible place?
- Is the bathroom safe?
  - Lower the hot water on the thermostat or hot water tank to prevent accidental burns during showers.
  - Is there a bath mat or shower chair available?
  - Are there hand rails in appropriate areas (shower and toilet)?

It's important that an individual living with dementia feels comfortable and safe in the environment they are living in. Experiencing confusion, disorientation, limited coordination and memory loss can have a significant impact on safety within the home.

Create a happy environment with familiarity and routines to help the individual feel as independent and safe as possible. Changes in the environment may add to confusion and should be avoided. It is important that the caregiver help the individual living with dementia feel as secure as possible.

### How You Can Help

#### Safety Tips

- Remove, disable or lock up any guns in the home.
- Lock all cleaning products such as laundry detergent or "pods", bleach or windex.
- Place deadbolts or locks on doors or windows that may create an easy access for the individual to be able to get outside and wander.
- Lock up all medications.
- Keep floors clutter free, including removing rugs that pose as a trip hazard.
- Add grab bars to the shower.
- Obtain a shower chair if the individual is having difficulty showering independently.
- Install slip resistant shower mats.
- Use nightlights in halls that are typically darker to prevent tripping or confusion.
- Check appliances such as toasters and microwaves to ensure there are no safety hazards are visible.
- Make sure all smoke detectors are working properly.
- Place easy to read clocks throughout the house.

**For more information about caregiver tips or program availability through Living Well with Dementia, please contact Easterseals Homemakers & Health Services at 603.335.1770.**

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