

# Tips for preventing falls at home

## Everywhere

- Remove throw rugs and scatter rugs.
- Tape down long cords; telephone, electric, extension, oxygen, etc.
- Clear all walkways of clutter.
- Light all walkways well.
- Put bells on pets so you know where they are.
- Keep pets and toys from under foot.
- Have lighted wall switches.
- If the light switch is not at the entrance to a room, have a standing lamp ready to be turned on before you enter the room (especially in the dark).
- Wear low-heeled shoes or slippers with non-slip soles.
- Keep the length of pants, slacks, skirts at or above the ankle.
- Use cordless phones and have a handset close to each room.
- Have commonly used items within easy reach; reduce bending and reaching.
- Avoid stools or ladders.

## In the Bathroom

- Install grab bars in shower and bath.
- Put non-slip strips or a non-slip mat in shower or bath.
- Exercise extra caution around water, clothing or other objects dropped on the floor.
- Use a night light.

## In Living Areas

- Avoid low, soft couches and chairs.
- Avoid rocking chairs.
- Avoid chairs on wheels or castors; if you have them, make sure they are stabilized against a wall or table before standing up or sitting down.
- Sit in a sturdy chair with arm rests. If it is too low, adapt the seat height with a firm cushion or pillow, or with a folded blanket, to make sitting and standing safer and easier.
- Place an end table or TV tray table next to where you usually sit. Keep glasses, mobile phone, books, remote control, medications, water, or anything you use frequently on this table for easy access.

## In the Bedroom

- Get out of bed slowly; especially if you have blood pressure problems; sit on edge of bed first, then stand up.
- Always use slippers; do not walk around in socks only.
- Keep the length of nightgowns, pajamas and bathrobes above the ankle.
- Be careful around bedspreads, especially the corners.
- Have a nightlight on, especially showing the path to the bathroom.
- Make sure the pathway to the bathroom is completely free of clutter.

## Communicating with your physician

- Report all changes in balance, equilibrium, dizziness and lightheadedness to your physician.

*Information provided by El Camino Hospital, E-2816\_PreventFallsHomeMar10*