

STAY SAFE: RECOGNIZE & REMOVE TRIP HAZARDS AT HOME

SEMINAR MATERIALS

Materials are available
on the ICOA FPAM website
www.aging.idaho.gov/falls



SEMINAR RECORDING

- The seminar is being **recorded**
- A link will be on our website
www.aging.idaho.gov/falls It will also be
It will also be on our YouTube channel
www.youtube.com/@IdahoCOA

GOT QUESTIONS?

Use the Questions panel to ask what you're curious about

Our ZOOMbie will pose them to our expert panelist during the Q&A after each section or at the end of the seminar

TECHNICAL EMERGENCY PLAN

- If you are **disconnected**, log back in as soon as possible
- If we **lose our panelist**, They will log back in ASAP and continue their discussion
- If I am disconnected, everyone else will continue.
- **If solar flares** shut down this hemisphere, We will contact you when



WHAT WE'LL DISCUSS, SO YOU CAN BE FALLS-FREE

- Understanding falls
- Why Worry About Home hazards?
- Lighting
- Stairs
- Rugs
- Bathrooms
- Furniture
- Pets

The image features a complex abstract background. A large, light blue circle is the central focus, containing the text 'UNDERSTANDING FALLS'. To its left, a dark blue triangle and a green triangle are stacked vertically. To its right, a thick orange ring and a thick purple ring are stacked vertically. The top of the image has a horizontal bar with a purple-to-green gradient. The bottom right corner has a brown bar with a small grey dot.

UNDERSTANDING FALLS



**UNINTENTIONALLY MOVING DOWNWARD,
TYPICALLY RAPIDLY AND FREELY
WITHOUT CONTROL, FROM A HIGHER TO
A LOWER LEVEL**



■ **WHY WORRY ABOUT HOME HAZARDS?**

- In Idaho, falls happen most often at home (66.9%)
- EMS response to falls 7,560
- Falls at home 4,619
- Transfer to hospital age 65-84 4,325, and age 85+ 2,480
- Average medical costs in Idaho for unintentional falls in 2020 was \$38,373
- Common cause of loss of function, increased social isolation, decreased general health, loss of independence and early institutionalization



***AVOIDING* FALLS
IS THE KEY!**



JAMES CLOVIS

**Certified Aging in Place
Specialist
Boise Valley Habitat for
Humanity
Construction Manager**







TODAY'S GAME PLAN



The image features a central light blue circle with the word "RUGS" in bold black text. To the left, a dark blue triangle and a green triangle are stacked. To the right, a thick orange ring and a thick purple ring are stacked. The background is white with a light gray horizontal bar at the top. The entire composition is framed by a thin purple line at the top and a thin brown line at the bottom.

RUGS

RUGS

- Leading cause of unintentional injury
- Remove or replace if do not lay flat
- Replace if they slip on floor, particularly when wet
- Heavy mats provide more stable surface



RUGS WITH SENTIMENTAL VALUE?

- Have no slip liner added
- Add traction corners
- Less expensive than replacement and good place to start





SLIPPERY SURFACES

SLIPPERY SURFACES

- **HAZARD:** Wearing socks on smooth surfaces
Solution: Rubber soled slippers or traction socks
- Keep mop or towels near entryways to dry spills/drips
- Use non-slip rugs



The image features a complex abstract composition. A large, light blue circle is the central focus, containing the text 'BATHROOMS'. To its left, a dark blue triangle and a green triangle are positioned. Above the circle, a thick orange ring and a purple ring are partially visible. The background is white, framed by a dark purple border at the top and a brown border at the bottom. A thin grey line with a small dot is located in the bottom right corner.

BATHROOMS



BATHROOMS

- Room with highest risk of falls
- Many slip hazards
 - Slippery wet surfaces
 - Clutter (rugs, clothes, towels, cords, toys)
- A frequently used room
- First solution: Non-slip rug (safe and comfortable)



BATHROOMS (CONT.)

- HAZARD: Toilets can have condensation that drips on floor
 - Non-slip rug
 - Hand rails
 - Standing Security Pole (uses pressure springs)
 - A walker can be used to assist as well
 - None require drilling into walls or floors

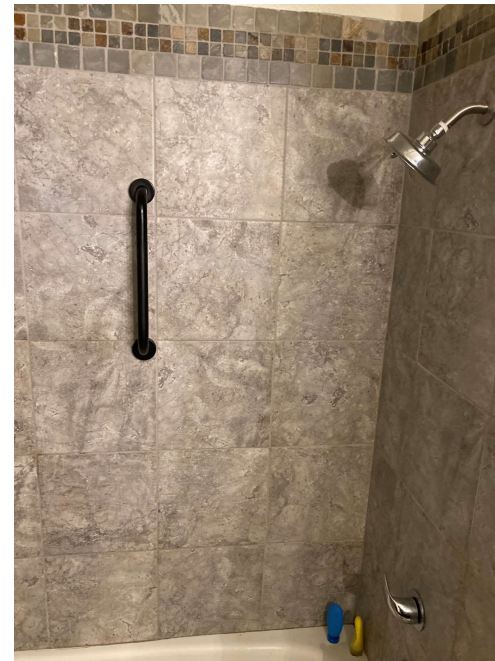


BATHROOMS (EVEN MORE)

- HAZARD: Added risk of hitting head when fall (smaller room with hard fixtures)
- Bathtub is most common cause of head injury in bathroom falls
- Sink, countertop, and toilet are also hazards when falling on a slick surface



BATHROOM SAFETY SOLUTIONS



THE MATH OF A SLIP & FALL

A 5'9" person falling at 32.17 feet per second squared, strikes the floor at 20 feet per second or about 14 MPH





LIGHTING & STAIRS

WHAT'S DANGEROUS ABOUT THIS?

1. Poor Lighting
2. No reflective tape or paint on the stair steps
3. No Paint or tape on handrail



STAIRS THE SAFE WAY

- Edge of each step clearly marked
- Stairs are uniform size
- Handrail well marked and sturdy
- Well lit
- High contrast



MORE ISN'T ALWAYS BETTER

- HAZARD: Too bright lights and reflective surfaces cause glare that can be blinding
- Solutions:
 - Use bright but not too bright lights
 - Turn on bulb “warm” color, if they have that setting
 - Lower shades or use curtain sheers to reduce glare
 - Place lamps where they won’t shine directly into eyes when using halls and walkways
 - Use colored tablecloths to cover bright white or reflective tabletops



NIGHT LIGHTING

- HAZARD: Dark rooms and hallways at night
- Solution: Nightlights, ideal color is red
 - Provides enough light to show the way and avoid obstacles
 - Especially important for people with low vision
 - Least disruptive to circadian rhythm (sleep-wake cycle) which is more important as we grow older
 - Sets a pleasant atmosphere and mood for a room



AVOID NIGHTTIME EMERGENCY FALLS

- HAZARD: Trying to turn on lights at night when you are in a hurry
- Solutions:
 - Use a touch lamp at your bedside
 - Keep a flashlight with a moderate beam at your bedside
- Any appropriate light that is easy to operate is a good choice



HOME MODIFICATIONS CAN IMPACT SAFETY

- Carefully consider how changes may impact mobility through your home
- HAZARD: Different level edges between original home and additions
Slight step becomes more hazardous as we age
- Obstacle for adaptive equipment, making them dangerous and burdensome to use
- Solution: Placing a ramp- style transition and some tape
- Don't forget: An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure



ARRANGING FURNITURE FOR SAFETY

- As a person ages their physical ability declines
- What used to be “comfortable” is now difficult to get in and out of
- Easy tasks can become risky over time
- Furniture is expensive to replace and can have sentimental value
- Risk with furniture are often just lived with



WHAT ABOUT SENTIMENTAL VALUE?

First question: Is the furniture safe and sturdy ?

- If not, must do something immediately
 - Repair it
 - Move it to an area so it is kept but not used
 - Give it to a family member



QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT SAFE FURNITURE ARRANGEMENT

- Does the furniture block access to window blinds and shades?
- Is the furniture pushing a rug into a trip hazard position?
- Can people sit and stand without other obstructions?
- Is traffic flow logical and safe in and out of the room?
- Is it possible to arrange furniture so they can be used as handrails?



PETS

- Great companions and a huge part of senior health, especially for those living alone
- HAZARD:
 - Like to be close to their owners
 - Often rest on floor, quiet, and not thought of until stepped on
- Solutions
 - Place a collar with a bell on your pet, or a very bright colored collar
 - Train pet to use a specific bed or sleeping area (cats not so much)
 - At night place pet in a specific room with appropriate supplies
 - When getting a new pet, consider getting a breed/color that is in contrast with your decor



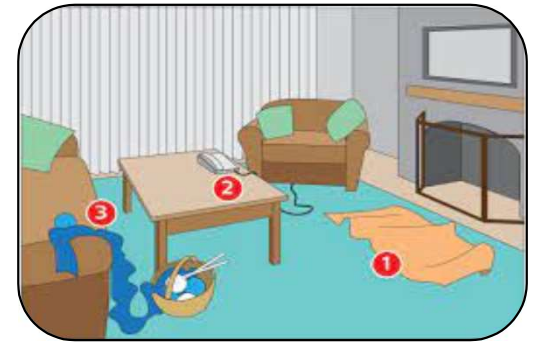
REMEMBERING THE BASICS



- Cords
Consideration for safety



Clutter





**GETTING ASSISTANCE WITH
HOME MODIFICATIONS**



NOW WHAT DO I DO?

- Step 1: Identify trip, slip, and fall hazards
- Step 2: Make the many simple and inexpensive changes you can
 - Securing rugs
 - Moving clutter and cords
 - Adding brighter lights/nighlights
- Talk with a home modification specialist about significant modifications
- Seek financial and/or skilled assistance if necessary

PERFORM YOUR OWN HOME AUDIT

- STEADI Check for Safety Brochure
- A home falls prevention checklist
- Available from our Falls Prevention Resource Library
- www.aging.idaho.gov/falls

REQUEST A FREE HOME AUDIT!

- Many agencies provide free home safety checks
- Often, an “outside eye” can see things you and others may not
- Easier, less time-consuming, less painful, and less expensive to meet with someone for an hour than recover from a fall



Falls Prevention - Trip Hazards at Home
(<http://aging.idaho.gov/falls>)



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY REPAIR PROGRAM



Critical Home Repairs

The most common critical home repairs includes:

- Installation of mobility/accessibility ramps
- Installation of grab bars in bathrooms/showers
- Roof repair/replacements
- Flooring replacements
- Re-design of interior space to prevent falls
- Plumbing & electrical repairs
- Window/siding replacement
- Water heater replacements

*Help Habitat keep vulnerable people
in their homes.*





Critical Home Repairs



The purpose of the Critical Repairs Program is to keep low-income homeowners in their homes.

Low-income homeowners typically have just enough money to survive, but never enough to make home repairs that ensure their safety and long-term health.

75% of the homeowners we serve are elderly, and 50% are veterans.

Help Habitat keep vulnerable people in their homes.



ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY PROJECT

- The *Idaho Assistive Technology Project* provides support for individuals with disabilities and older persons in their personal selection of assistive technology as they live, work, and play in their communities.
- <https://idahoat.org/>

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME & SUPPORT

▪ **Participants**

- We hope you understand falls & how to prevent them. Thank you for your support!

▪ **Panelists**

- Our experts' insights, knowledge & experience are irreplaceable!

▪ **ZOOMbies**

- We can't do any of it without our behind-the-scenes ZOOM gurus!



READY TO ASSIST



Your local Area Agency on Aging is ready to assist with services and referrals

<http://aging.idaho.gov/Area-Agencies-On-Aging/>