

Safety Sense

Safely Age in Style



"Getting older is like climbing a mountain; you get a little out of breath, but the view is much better." Actress Ingrid Bergman (1915-1982) offered that little tidbit! Aging is a natural, biological process that, hopefully, we all get to experience. Keeping ourselves healthy while we age focuses on being dedicated to a nutritious diet, regular exercise, and keeping up with regular healthcare appointments. In addition to maintaining physical and cognitive health, aging brings with it a new set of safety concerns. Here's a compilation of tips from Health In Aging and the National Institute on Aging that may help.

Fall Prevention

- At your annual checkup, work with your healthcare provider to assess fall risk, especially if you've fallen in the past year or have balance issues; and consider taking Tai Chi or Yoga to improve your balance.
- If needed, use assistive devices like canes and walkers.
- Install safety features like ramps with handrails, non-slip strips, and under-stair lighting.

Home Hazard Reduction

- Make sure all hallways, stairs, and paths are well lit and clear of clutter, cords, and small furniture.
- Have bright lighting and nightlights in hallways and bathrooms.
- Install grab bars near toilets and tubs or showers.
- Tape all area rugs to the floor so they do not move when you walk on them and never place throw rugs at the bottom or top of stairs.

Fire and Electrical Safety

- Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and check or replace batteries twice year.
- Never leave candles unattended or smoke in bed.
- Do not overload outlets and replace damaged cords.
- If a fire starts, don't try to put it out. Hit the fire button on your Paragon Alarm System or call 911.

Emergency Preparedness

- Keep emergency numbers (911, Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222, family members, healthcare provider) on your phones and in large print on the refrigerator for quick access.
- Have a home emergency plan and know two escape routes from your home.
- Keep an emergency kit with essentials well stocked and handy.

Yes, staying active in your senior years helps you maintain muscle strength and mobility, but assuring you're following safety protocols at home can keep you living independently and on a path to being able to enjoy "the view" for years to come.

