

## Home Safety Tips

### General Safety

- ❖ It is important to allow people to help you when you return home. You will still have some difficulty performing certain tasks. Remember you are not a burden to the people helping you.
- ❖ You are more likely to feel dizzy or lightheaded after sitting or lying for long periods of time. Therefore, it is a good idea to sit for a few minutes before standing, then rise carefully and slowly begin to walk.

#### Lighting

- Be sure to have bright lighting throughout the home and on paths leading to the front door.
- Light switches should be at easily reached heights.
- Night lights should be placed in the bedroom and hallway leading to the bathroom.

#### Throw Rugs

- Rugs should have a non-slip backing or be removed completely.
- Carpet edges should be well-secured. This is especially important on the stairs.

#### Furniture

- Arrange furniture to allow plenty of walking room, especially if you use an assistive device.
- Make sure the path between the bed and the bathroom is clear of furniture and clutter.

#### Seating

- Choose chairs with straight backs and sturdy armrests.
- Do not sit on chairs or sofas that are too soft or too low to the ground.

#### Assistive Devices

- Always keep your walker or cane close to you when maneuvering in your home.
- Avoid twisting or small spaces where you cannot fit your walker safely.

- ❖ Avoid carrying large, heavy or awkward objects while walking.
- ❖ Remove electrical cords from walkways.
- ❖ Be aware of water spills and have them cleaned up quickly.

- ❖ Wear supportive shoes with rubber soles. Backless and toeless shoes are not recommended.
- ❖ Keep phones within reach or carry cordless or cellular phones in case of emergency.

### Kitchen

- Prior to your procedure, you may want to freeze a few meals and/or have healthy microwavable meals available.
- Put frequently used items at chest level for easy access or use a reacher to get lighter items in high or low cabinets.
- To safely move items in the kitchen:
  - Slide items across the counter.
  - Place items on a wheeled cart.
  - Place items in a walker bag or walker basket.
- Plan ahead when preparing meals to minimize the amount of time spent walking for standing.
- When cooking, try to use the back burners in case you lose your balance and need to steady yourself on the stove so that you will not burn your hands.
- Plan to have someone help you with grocery shopping for up to 6 weeks after surgery.

### Bathroom

- To prevent slipping:
  - Put a rubber mat on the tub floor.
  - Place a non-skid bath mat next to the tub/shower.
- To decrease the risk of falling, you may want to purchase a tub seat, install bath rails, and/or use a hand-held shower head.
- Use liquid soap or put soap in a stocking tied to a bath rail.
- Use a long-handled sponge to wash your back and legs.
- Do not take hot showers - this may increase your blood pressure which can cause dizziness and lead to falling.

### Stairs

- Stairs should be free of clutter and well-maintained.
- Handrails:
  - Be sure to use the railing when available.
  - If you are installing handrails, they should begin a little before the first stair and end after the last stair.
- Take your time when going up and down the stairs.
- Consider staying on one level of your home instead of negotiating the stairs numerous times during the day.