

Preparing Your Home for Your Needs After Surgery

It's important to prepare your home to be safe and ready for you after surgery. Use the following guidelines. Check each item box as you complete that item.

- Move frequently used items in the kitchen, bathroom, bedroom and workshop to tabletop-height surfaces or to middle shelves.
- Move low-height tables away from the couch or chairs. Have clear pathways and eliminate clutter around the house.
- Put nightlights in the bedroom, bathroom and/or hallway(s) to prevent you from tripping over something during the night.
- Pick up all throw rugs in your walking or standing path. Consider using double face tape to secure carpet edges.
- Check stair railings to make sure they are secure. If you are adding a railing, extend it a few inches past the end of the staircase. It's best if all stairs have railings.
- Consider first floor options (temporary) if your bathroom isn't on the main floor. Do you have access to a portable commode?
- Put grab bars in the bathtub/shower. Consider other key areas for grab bars such as by the toilet. (Grab bars should be installed into wall studs to ensure that they are secure.)
- Have access to a shower/tub transfer bench for bathing.
- Apply adhesive slip strips to the tub.
- Consider a hand-held shower head.
- Consider using a soap dispenser/liquid soap in the bathtub/shower rather than using hand-held soap. Place a bar soap in a nylon stocking and tie it onto a soap dish.
- Make your phone accessible to your primary sitting area and bed. Cell phones are helpful. Carry a cell phone in your fanny pack when you are home alone for increased ease of emergency access.
- Use a kitchen cart to move heavy or hot items.
- Pick out a chair to sit in when you come home. A good chair is firm with arms and seat height at least 18 inches from the floor, but one that allows your feet to be flat on the floor and your knees to be lower than your hips.

Other Things to Think About

Make plans in advance to take care of the following tasks after your surgery. Check each item box as you complete that item.

- Find someone to do your yard work.
- Arrange to have your paper and mail delivered to your door rather than curbside, as needed.
- Arrange transportation to the grocery store, community events, family activities, and doctor and therapy appointments.
- Find someone to help care for your pet, if needed.
- Prepare and freeze a few meals before your surgery.