

Staying Safe in the Bathroom

Did you know that the most dangerous place in your home is the bathroom? It's true, especially for folks over the age of 65. With more than 80% of household falls happening in the bathroom, it is wise to give your bathroom a quick makeover designed to keep you on your feet and safe. Be sure to check out the bathroom in your parents' home as well; just a few changes can make a huge difference in decreasing their chances of a broken bone or head trauma.

Clear the clutter.

One of the easiest way to reduce falls and slips is to clear out the clutter in the bathroom. Clutter can give one more opportunity to trip or can break a fall in a dangerous way. Move the hamper to the bedroom, and remove any freestanding shelving.



Check your rugs.

Safety starts on the floor, and rugs that can slip or slide are a major fall risk. Be sure that all of your rugs have a rubber bottom to prevent sliding. Also, double check that rugs are not curling at the ends, which could cause mom to trip or lose her footing.

Stop the slick.

The shower can be very dangerous due to the slick and wet floor. I have slipped and lost my footing in my shower more time than I like to admit. To prevent mom or dad from slipping in the shower, invest in some skid free additions to add to the floor. Your options are plentiful, from tape to mats; you can find something that suits your style and price range at your local hardware store or by a quick search on the internet.

Grab and sit.

Grab bars are an inexpensive addition that make a bathroom exceedingly safe. Put one near the toilet and in the shower to assure that dad has the extra help and balance when he needs it most. If mom or dad has balance or endurance issues, a shower bench is a wonderful addition to the bathroom. You can have one permanently installed or use a version that can come in and out of the shower as needed. Either way, a hand shower head pairs nicely with a shower bench to ensure that mom and dad are still exercising their independence.

Make a plan.

Make sure you have a plan in place for what to do in case a fall does happen in the bathroom. Many times, seniors don't have a reliable way to call for help from the bathroom. Consider putting a telephone in the bathroom, or assure that their call device is readily available in the bathroom. If you choose to hang a phone from the wall, consider making it close enough to the ground, as mom will likely be on the floor when she is calling. Also, make sure emergency numbers are programmed into the phone, if possible, for easier access to help.

Enlist caring and knowledgeable help.

If showering is still a challenge on your own, you might consider bringing in help. Here at [Visiting Angels Wayzata](#), our caregivers are trained on shower and bathroom safety. They are caring and able to help your loved one stay safe and sound. Contact us to see how our caregivers can best assist your loved one.

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