

Tips to Help Seniors Live Independently at Home

There are many low-cost things that can be done to help seniors live independently in their homes for longer periods of time.

Some tips from Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing and AARP:

- Wear non-slip shoes, not slippers, in the house.
 - Avoid area rugs or use double-sided tape to hold them in place.
 - If you must climb, use a sturdy step-stool with a hand-rail, not a chair.
 - Place everyday items in easy-to-reach places, including cooking items.
 - Sit to cook if possible.
 - Keep the microwave low enough to reach.
 - Use a raised toilet seat, which can add 2- to 5-inches without replacing the toilet.
 - Place non-skid safety strips or mat in the tub, and use a tub bench or shower chair.
 - Install grab bars in the bathroom, or if that's not possible, a safety rail can be clamped onto the side of the tub.
- Railings on both sides make stairs easier.
 - Use tools such as a button hook/zip pull or a "reacher" that grabs hard-to-reach items.
 - Carry a portable- or cell-phone around the house in case of a fall or other emergency.
 - Consider a home assessment from an occupational therapist who can tailor suggestions to your functional ability.
 - When remodeling, AARP suggests consulting a Certified Aging in Place Specialist, a program of the National Association of Home Builders that designates contractors, remodelers, and others who are trained in modifying homes for the elderly.

Source: Associated Press (2013, July 11-17). Tips to Help Seniors Live Independently at Home. *Epoch Times*, p. B2.