Older Adults

Falls and Fires

Falls and fires are the two leading causes of unintentional injuries and deaths among adults 65 and older. Older adults have a higher death rate from fires compared to the general population as well. Falls are the leading cause of product-related injuries among adults 65 and older, with about two-thirds of hospital emergency room visits involving falls. Consumers should install handrails and make sure surfaces are slip-resistant. Remove impediments and other tripping hazards, and make sure stairs and other areas are well lighted. Install a smoke alarm in every bedroom, outside every sleeping area, and on every floor of the home. Install a carbon monoxide alarm outside of sleeping areas. Carefully use and maintain space heaters, fireplaces and all fuel burning appliances.

Stay Safe While Being Active

While it's important to stay active, it's also important to play it safe. As more older adults engage in physical activities, sports-related injuries are increasing. This is especially true for those who ride bicycles, ski, lift weights and use exercise machines. The increase in injuries is due to more older adults engaging in active sports. Most of these injuries can be prevented. For example, in a CPSC study, very few of the older bikers treated in emergency rooms for head injuries were wearing bike helmets. However, wearing a bike helmet can reduce the risk of serious head injury by up to 85 percent. That's a small precaution for a big payoff.

Key Role as Caregiver

Two and a half million grandparents are taking care of grandchildren as primary caregivers and more children are with their grandparents during the day than any other type of daycare setting. With this in mind, grandparents should always put the safety of children first – from nursery to playground, grandparents must be diligent in keeping their grandkids safe.

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