



Did You Know:

Each year, according to estimates by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), nearly 1 million people over age 65 are treated in hospital emergency rooms for injuries associated with the products they live with and use every day. The death rate from unintentional injuries in the home is approximately three times greater for older people than for the younger population. Specifically, there are 60 deaths per 100,000 persons 65 and older, while there are 20 deaths per 100,000 under 65.

Managing The Environment:

Slips and falls are the main source of injury for older people in the home. First Choice Home Health recommends the use of grab-bars and non-slip mats in the bathtub, handrails on both sides of the stairs, and slip-resistant carpets and rugs. Burns occur from hot tap water and from open flame. First Choice recommends consumers turn down the temperature on their water heater to 120 degrees Fahrenheit to prevent scalds. First Choice also recommends the installation and maintenance of at least one smoke detector on every floor of the home. Older consumers should consider purchasing nightwear that is flame resistant, and choose garments made of tightly woven fabrics such as 100 percent polyester, 100 percent nylon or 100 percent wool.

• **Medication Safety:** One person dies each day and 1.3 million people are injured each year due to medication errors. Adverse Drug Effects (ADEs) may rank between the 4th and 6th leading causes of death. The annual cost of drug related morbidity and mortality is estimated at \$177 billion in the U.S.

- Take your medication exactly as prescribed by your physician.
- Keep all medications in one location if storage instructions are the same.
- Do not discontinue medications without physician's permission.
- Never use someone else's prescription medication.
- Medications you no longer use should be disposed of in a safe manner.
- Store medication in a safe place according to label instructions.

• **Fall Safety:**

- Keep pathways open and clutter free.
- Make sure loose small objects are off the floor.
- Make sure that carpet is not loose or uneven.

- Throw rugs should be removed.
- Do not run cords under rugs.
- Keep adequate lighting throughout home.

• **Personal Safety:**

- Keep emergency numbers posted by all telephones.
- Keep all doors and windows locked.
- Do not open doors for strangers. Ask for identification.
- Keep flashlight with fresh batteries at bedside.
- Keep frequently used items within easy reach.

• **Oxygen Safety:**

- Do not use oxygen by open flames.
- Do not smoke while using oxygen.
- Store portable tanks lying down. Do not stand up in closet or room.
- In an electrical outage, be sure portable tanks are easily accessible.
- Notify utility company that you are on oxygen and that you should be a priority for any outage.

