Bringing Health Care Home

St. Peter’s Health Care Services, a comprehensive, integrated system of care, is the Capital Region’s largest provider of health care services.

St. Peter’s Hospital is proud to be designated a national Magnet™ Hospital for consistent excellence in nursing services. St. Peter’s has also been ranked among an elite group of hospitals nationwide as a Distinguished Hospital for Patient Safety™, Top 100 Cardiovascular Hospital, Top 100 Stroke Hospital and Top 100 Hospital for overall clinical services.

St. Peter’s continues to set the pace for health care innovations. We are 5,000 professionals who know that technology is critical to treatment, but compassion is the key to healing.
Home accidents are a major cause of injury and death, especially for people over 60.

As people grow older, they may become less agile and their bones tend to break more easily. They may also become more forgetful, tire more easily and spend a good deal of time at home alone.

You can help prevent accidents from happening in the home by taking special precautions to ensure a safe living environment. Use the checklists in this brochure to determine how safe your home is, and what you can do to make your home an even safer place to live.

**General Safety**

- Post emergency phone numbers at each phone.
- Keep outside doors locked. Ask for identification to verify a stranger’s identity.
- Keep valuables out of sight.
- Hire a reputable company for all household maintenance.

**Electrical Safety**

- Keep appliances and cords clean, in good condition and away from liquids.
- Avoid “overcrowding” outlets with several plugs being used at the same time.
- Limit the use of extension cords.
- Replace burned-out light bulbs.
- Keep appliances and cords clean, in good condition and away from liquids.
- Avoid “overcrowding” outlets with several plugs being used at the same time.
- Limit the use of extension cords.
- Replace burned-out light bulbs.

**Power Outages**

- If you have an emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest hospital.
- If it is not an emergency, call your nearest relative or neighbor to stay with you.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed to maintain temperature inside.

**Bathroom Safety**

- Install non-skid mats and grab bars by bath and toilet.
- Firmly install towel bars and soap dishes made of durable material. **Do Not** use either of these things as a grab bar.
- Use night lights to brighten the way to the bathroom at night.
- Keep electrical appliances away from sink, tub or shower area.
- Set water heater temperature below 120°F to prevent accidental scalding.

**Kitchen Safety**

- Keep curtains away from the stove and other open flames.
- Turn on exhaust hood when cooking, and clean filters regularly.
- Keep counter space clean and uncluttered.
- Keep pot holders and oven mitts near the stove.
- Avoid cooking on high heat with oils. **Do Not** wear loosely fitted sleeves while cooking.
- Store heavy items in easy-to-reach locations.

**Fire Safety**

- Post the fire department number by the phone.
- Place smoke detectors in hallways and near sleeping areas.
- Check smoke detector batteries and change them regularly, or at least when you change your clocks for daylight savings time.
- Check fire extinguishers frequently for stability. **Do Not** smoke in bed or when oxygen is in use.
- Know your fire escape routes and have two planned exits.
- If your fire escape is cut off, remain calm, close the door and seal the cracks to hold back any smoke. Signal for help at a window.
- A bed-bound patient can be evacuated to a safe area by placing him/her on a sturdy blanket and dragging the blanket across the floor to safety.
- Remember life safety is first, but if the fire is contained and small, you may be able to use your fire extinguisher until the fire department arrives.

**Safety on Stairs**

- Outline the edges of steps with brightly colored paint or tape so they will be easier to see. Be sure to replace tape should it become loose to avoid tripping.
- Make sure handrails on stairs are securely fastened.

**Temperatures**

- Make sure that the nighttime temperature in your home is not lower than 65°F. Prolonged exposure to cold may cause a drop in body temperature and increase the risk of falling.

**Telephone Safety**

- Have emergency phone numbers (e.g., doctor, police and fire) near every telephone in your home.
- Put one telephone down low where someone unable to stand can reach it, and/or have a portable phone nearby.

**Walking Surfaces**

- Remove throw rugs where possible or make sure there is a non-skid backing on these rugs.
- Avoid using small rugs at the top of stairs.
- Secure the edges of carpets.
- Keep the sidewalk free of ice and wet leaves.