

Safety Guidelines

from Glancy Rehabilitation Center



Bathroom Safety:

- Have handrails/grab bars installed in your bathroom near your toilet and your shower/tub.
- Place a non-skid mat or adhesive strips in your tub to prevent slipping.
- Use non-skid bathmats on the floor or wear non-skid shower shoes when bathing.
- Use a tub bench or a shower chair (a bedside toilet can also be used in a walk-in shower). It is safer to sit and bathe rather than stand.

Body Mechanics & Fall Prevention:

- Be aware of drug interactions. Tranquilizers, heart medication, blood pressure medication, mood-altering drugs and alcohol may increase drowsiness, dizziness and slow your reflexes, which may increase your risk of falls.
- Focus your vision on a stationary object as you move around. Find a stable point of reference when changing positions.
- If you become dizzy when going from lying down to sitting up, sit for a few minutes before standing.
- If you become dizzy when going from sitting to standing, stand for a minute to see if your dizziness resolves before you begin walking. If your dizziness does not resolve, try sitting and pumping your ankles before attempting to stand again.
- If you do fall, try to break your fall with your arms in order to prevent hitting your head.
- If you feel like you are going to fall, keep your feet apart and crouch down; a lower center of gravity and a wider base of support increase your stability.
- Maintain proper posture; stand up as straight as possible.
- Promptly report new episodes of dizziness, loss of balance or unsteady walking to your doctor.
- Stand and walk with your feet slightly apart in order to maintain an adequate base of support.
- Take your time with activities; avoid quick head movements or quick position changes.

General Safety Tips:

- Check the heels of your shoes for uneven wear patterns.
- If you have visual or hearing impairments, wear your glasses and/or use your hearing aids so that you can be more aware of your environment.

- Increase or maintain your leg strength. Exercise regularly (talk to your doctor to determine what level or type of exercise is appropriate for you).
- Use appropriate canes, walkers, crutches or other assisting devices your therapist recommended.
- Wear non-slip footwear (example: lace-up walking shoes). Avoid high-heeled shoes, open-back slippers and open-toe sandals.

Home Safety:

- Arrange your furniture to provide as few obstacles as possible when walking in your home; avoid unnecessary clutter.
- Be aware of the surface you are walking on:
 - Be cautious when walking outside, especially on uneven surfaces, inclines, grass or gravel.
 - Pay attention to door jambs; step over them, not on them.
 - Use handrails when walking up and down the stairs or steps. It is a good idea to take one step at a time, instead of going step-over-step.
- Have proper lighting throughout your home, especially at night. Put night lights and easily accessible lamps in every room.
- If you have a pet, watch that they are not underfoot when you are up and walking.
- Remove all throw rugs and ensure that all phone and extension cords are not in your walking path.

Kitchen Safety:

- Avoid using stepstools to reach higher cabinets; a reacher/grabber can be used for out-of-reach items.
- Clean up all spills immediately.
- Have frequently used items at counter level or within easy reach.
- If preparing items that take time, try sitting during this activity rather than standing for a prolonged period of time.
- Remove all throw rugs.



GLANCY REHABILITATION CENTER

Gwinnett Medical Center – Duluth