

# Creating a Safe Environment for Those Who Have Experienced a Stroke

According to the National Stroke Association, there are several tips and tricks to making a house more accessible for those who have experienced a stroke.

**Forty percent of stroke survivors suffer serious falls within a year after their strokes.**

## To avoid falls:

- ☐ Clear paths to the kitchen, bedroom, and bathroom.
- ☐ Move electrical cords out of pathways.
- ☐ Wear non-skid shoes and avoid slick surfaces.
- ☐ Remove loose carpets and runners in hallways and stairwells or fasten them with non-skid tape to improve traction.
- ☐ Replace thick carpeting with lower pile carpeting to make wheelchair or walker movement easier.
- ☐ Install handrails for support in going up and down stairs and check to make sure they're securely fastened to the wall.
- ☐ Consider stair glides, stair lifts, and platform lifts if stairs are required.

## Doing laundry will be less challenging with a few simple changes:

- ☐ Move laundry machines to a place where they are easily accessible.
- ☐ Stackable, front-loading machines may be easier to reach and take up less space.
- ☐ Use easy-to-reach, labeled detergents and laundry supplies.
- ☐ Have easy-to-read markings for wash settings.
- ☐ Use a nearby table or cart at the right height for sorting and folding.
- ☐ Use an ironing board that folds down from the wall.

## Making the bedroom safe and comfortable:

- ☐ Install a light switch near the bed.
- ☐ Move/reorganize clothes and personal items to make them easier to access.
- ☐ Use a nightlight and clear a path for easy access to the toilet at night.
- ☐ Keep a commode chair near the bed.
- ☐ Consider placing disposable "blue pads" underneath the sheets.



*Supporting Independence at Home*

438 NH Route 104 • New Hampton, NH 03256  
(603) 217-0149 • [www.LiveFreeHomeHealthCare.com](http://www.LiveFreeHomeHealthCare.com)

### Adjusting to challenges in the kitchen:

- ☐ If possible, use a stove with push-button controls at the front.
- ☐ Install automatic shut-off controls.
- ☐ Mount an over-the-stove mirror to help see stovetop contents if cooking while seated.
- ☐ Keep a clear space near the stove to place a hot pot or pan quickly.
- ☐ Have oven mitts on hand.
- ☐ Keep a fire extinguisher nearby.
- ☐ Adjust the kitchen table so it is the right height for a wheelchair or for a chair with arms that supports posture.

### Special utensils help people with physically-impaired arms and hands at the table:

- ☐ Flatware with built-up handles which are easier to grasp.
- ☐ Rocker knives for cutting food with one hand.
- ☐ Attachable rings which keep food from being pushed off the plate accidentally.

### Helpful bathroom devices:

- ☐ Grab bars in shower or tub.
- ☐ Sturdy handrails.
- ☐ Raised toilet seat or toilet chair.
- ☐ Tub bench.
- ☐ Adjustable or handheld showerhead.
- ☐ Bathing supplies that are easy to reach and use.
- ☐ Easy-to-use water control knobs with easy-to-see settings or long-handled levers.
- ☐ Non-slip flooring strips installed inside and outside of the tub.
- ☐ Long-handled brush.
- ☐ Squeeze bottles and soap pumps.
- ☐ Washing mitt with pockets for soap.
- ☐ Soap-on-a-rope.
- ☐ Electric toothbrush.
- ☐ Flip-top toothpaste tube.
- ☐ Electric razor.
- ☐ One-piece faucet with lever handles or long extensions, allowing water to be turned on and off with a fist or arm movement.
- ☐ Cut-out or roll-under sink, which allows room for legs underneath the sink while seated.
- ☐ Suction pads to hold grooming tools or bottles in place on a counter, requiring just one hand to pick up or use.

**Resource:** National Stroke Association is the leading national non-profit organization devoting all of its efforts and resources to stroke. NSA provides the most up-to-date information on prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and support for stroke survivors and their families. For more information on NSA contact 1-800-STROKES or visit [www.stroke.org](http://www.stroke.org).