

Fire Safety Tips for Older Adults

Protect yourself. Prevention is the best way to keep your home safe from fire.

Be Kitchen Wise: Never leave cooking unattended. Wear clothes with tight fitting sleeves when you cook. Always set a kitchen timer to remind you to turn off the burners and oven. Keep stove surfaces free of clutter and built-up grease.

Be Smoker Wary: Use large, deep, non-tip ashtrays. Empty ashtrays often, wetting the contents before dumping into the trash. Never smoke in bed or while consuming alcohol or taking medication that could make you drowsy or disoriented.

Give Space Heaters Space: Keep electric portable space heaters at least 3-feet from everything—including you! Just brushing against one could set your clothing on fire.

Install Smoke Detectors: Be sure to have smoke detectors outside all sleeping areas and on every level of your home, including the basement. Test your detectors monthly, and change your batteries once a year. If you sleep in a room with the doors closed, install a smoke detector inside the room as well. If you are hearing impaired, use a tested and approved smoke detector that triggers a strobe light.

Fire Safety Tips for People with Disabilities

If you have a disability, consider how it could affect your ability to escape from a fire in your home. If your disability requires special arrangements, make them part of the escape plan. For example, if you or someone you live with cannot escape alone, designate a member of the household to assist, and decide on backups in case the person isn't home.

- **This Way Out:** It's important that people with limited mobility stay as close to safety as possible. Consider sleeping on the ground floor, making escape easier. Have a telephone installed where you sleep.
- **Sound the Alarm:** Smoke alarms listed by a qualified testing laboratory save lives by sounding a warning and allowing people to escape. But what if you or someone in your home can't hear the alarm? Consider installing a smoke alarm that alerts with flashing lights. Some smoke alarms have a louder horn that is easier for people with impaired hearing to hear.
- **Stay Connected:** The majority of fatal home fires happen at night, and escape might be necessary through an area with smoke or in the dark. If you are unable to leave on your own, call the fire department and tell them where you are. If you have a cordless phone, try to take it with you if you have to escape from a fire.

A portion of this information was obtained from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).