Many people enjoy the sanctuary their homes provide from the hustle and bustle of the world. This makes accidents in the home such as falls, fire, poisoning and drowning even more unsettling.

You can reduce the risk of injury in your home. Doing so may take some time and money, but it will be well worth the effort.

**Fire**

- Put smoke alarms on every floor of your home, including the basement. Be sure each one has a label from a testing lab, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL). Test the batteries monthly, and replace them in the spring and in the fall.
- Plan an escape route in case of fire, and practice it twice a year. You may need escape ladders for upper floors. Be sure that everyone knows to get down on the floor and crawl out of a smoke-filled room.
- Keep a fire extinguisher handy.
- Use appliances that turn off automatically.
- Stay in the kitchen while cooking food.
- Never smoke in bed or while resting.
- Always be sure that smoking materials, such as matches, are completely extinguished before you throw them out.
- Have your furnace and chimney inspected every year.
- Put a safety screen in front of every fireplace.
- Throw away oily rags and other combustible materials.
- Check electrical cords regularly for worn spots.
- Never put a space heater near curtains or furniture.
- Don't cover light bulbs with anything flammable.
- Keep flammable materials, such as towels, away from stovetops.

**Falls**

- If you wax your floors, use nonskid wax.
- Use a sturdy stool or ladder with nonslip feet to reach high places.
- Put grab bars and non-slip mats or strips in the bathtub or shower.
- Consider getting rid of loose throw rugs.
- Repair tears in carpeting.
- Put nightlights in bedrooms and hallways.
- Have a light within reach of your bed.
- Wear shoes with nonslip soles.
- Install window guards if you have young children in your home.
- Make sure that stair handrails are secure.
- Keep stairs free of clutter.
Poisoning

- Keep household cleaners, medicine and other chemicals out of children’s reach and away from food.
- Buy medicine and cleaners with child-resistant caps.
- Avoid taking medicine in front of children, and never refer to medicine as candy.
- Use household chemicals only in well-ventilated areas.
- Know which cleaning products can’t be combined. Mixing certain chemicals together can create dangerous gases.
- Keep space heaters, furnaces and clothes dryers clean and working properly.
- Put a carbon monoxide detector outside bedrooms.

Drowning

- Learn to swim.
- Learn CPR.
- Don’t swim alone or let children swim unsupervised.
- If you are diving or jumping, be sure the water is at least nine feet deep.
- Never drink alcohol before or during water recreation.
- Don’t chew gum or eat while in the water.
- Have a telephone near the pool.
- Teach your children that they should never swim alone.
- Never leave children alone while they are in a pool or a bathtub.
- Keep children away from buckets that contain liquid. Empty buckets when you are finished with them.
- If you have a pool, put a fence around all four sides of it. Be sure that it has a self-closing and self-latching gate.

Advice for Cancer Survivors

June 5th is National Cancer Survivors Day

Many cancer survivors must deal with lingering physical and emotional problems months or even years after their treatments.

“The trauma of a life-threatening experience with cancer can have far-reaching effects, whether you count yourself as a survivor, a victor, or a victim,” says Greta E. Greer, M.S.W., manager of the Cancer Survivors Network, an online service of the American Cancer Society (ACS).

But, cancer survivors don’t have to go it alone, Ms. Greer stresses. “There’s hardly anyone walking around who hasn’t been affected by cancer one way or another,” she says. “So if you’re feeling alone or think no one else can understand, there are many ways to find and connect with others like yourself.”

Suggestions

Ms. Greer offers this advice to anyone who has had a brush with cancer:

- Stay in close touch with your health care provider. Find out how often you should have tests and follow-up care, and get your provider’s advice for healthful lifestyle changes. Be sure to tell any doctor or dentist who treats you about your history of cancer and cancer treatments, so any signs or symptoms can be addressed properly.

For more in-home safety tips, visit:
http://www.homesafetycouncil.org/AboutUs/HSM/au_hsm_w001.asp
• Talk to your provider about what you can do to relieve pain after treatment, and how long it will take for you to recover from treatment.

• Make sure to get a copy of your cancer treatment records or a summary, says the National Cancer Institute (NCI). (You may be charged for these.) By keeping your records up to date, you’ll have enough information to share with any new doctors you may see.

• Ask how to tell if the cancer may have returned. Regardless of the expected cure rate, cancer has at least some risk for recurrence. Learning the typical symptoms to watch for might save your life.

• Seek support. Support groups or professional counseling for cancer survivors can be a great source of comfort to help you and your family deal with:
  • feelings such as anger or sadness
  • the fear of a recurrence or of death
  • the search for meaning
  • worry about being discriminated against at work
  • questions about how to regain, develop, and build skills important for independent living
  • sexual and intimate partner issues
  • insurance;
  • when you need empathy and understanding when you’re feeling alone.

Many other cancer survivors have dealt with these issues, and are happy to offer support and practical solutions. Some support groups focus more on emotional support, others focus on providing education and information. Your local chapter of the American Cancer Society or your health care provider may be able to help you find support groups and counselors that meet your needs.

• Value new relationships. If previously close friends have distanced themselves from you because of your cancer, you’re not alone. Many people feel threatened by this disease. The good news is that friendships formed during or after an experience with cancer can be as valuable.

• Adopt a healthy lifestyle. Pay attention to healthful eating habits, regular physical activity, and quitting a smoking habit. Doing so can help lower your risk for future cancer and can help you ease stress and stay healthier overall. Talk with your health care provider about getting help with nutrition, exercise, smoking cessation, and stress reduction.

• Realize you may feel self-conscious. Your cancer treatment may change your appearance. Although you may not feel like being around people at first, you will gradually become more confident in how you look. Instead of focusing on your appearance, think more about the ways that cancer has made you a stronger person. Focus on the things in life that you can control rather than those you can’t, she adds. Maybe you can’t do everything like you used to, but you still can choose whether to stay home alone or get out and meet people.

• Be open to positive change. Have you ever heard, “Cancer helped me discover what was really important in my life”? Now’s your opportunity to make significant life changes. Consider taking up a new hobby or yoga, massage therapy, guided imagery, or other soul-opening activities, Ms. Greer suggests. “In every crisis there’s an opportunity,” she adds. “The Chinese character for ‘crisis’ is made up of two symbols -- one’s for danger, one’s for opportunity. There certainly are opportunities for the person who’s watching for them.”

Dealing with Common Issues

Many cancer survivors share these symptoms and experiences:

• Fear that cancer may return. All it may take is an annual Pap test or prostate exam to bring out your worst fears. For some, fear may be a nearly constant companion. Even when it seems out of place, the fear itself is real and may need to be addressed, Ms. Greer suggests. Follow your intuition. “Don’t be worried about appearing silly -- pick up the phone and call the doctor, especially if you have symptoms that don’t go away.”

• Fatigue. Advice for dealing with chronic fatigue includes: Know and honor your limitations. Listen to your body. Take naps to re-energize. Pace yourself. Delegate to others. Be clear and upfront with people about your problems with fatigue.

• Sexual issues. Various cancer treatments can cause vaginal dryness or early menopause in women, or impotence or urinary incontinence in men.

Continued on next page.
Strong emotions. Feelings of loss and depression are normal after cancer treatment, once all the crisis-related adrenaline subsides. “Let yourself feel down and feel the loss,” advises Ms. Greer. However, it’s not normal if negative emotions become pervasive and affect your relationships with others or your ability to carry out your usual activities. Talking with a mental health professional or other cancer survivors can help you feel less alone and isolated and help you deal with your feelings.

Pain. If you have chronic or acute pain, be sure to tell your health care provider. There are many ways to treat pain in almost all situations. See a pain specialist if your provider doesn’t take your pain seriously and control it adequately.

Health insurance. Make sure you continue to carry health insurance. A lapse in your coverage could allow a new health insurance to exclude the type of cancer you had from coverage, should it recur.

Screening for Men’s Health Problems
June 13th through 19th is National Men’s Health Week

Although you might not want to take the time to see your doctor if you’re feeling fine, regular checkups and screenings can help you find out about any potential health problems you may have. Early detection is crucial in treating the following conditions affecting men.

Testicular Cancer

Cancer of the testicle is the most common type of cancer in American men ages 29 to 35. The following are considered at-risk groups, according to the American Cancer Society (ACS): males ages 15 to 35 (especially Caucasians), men with a family history of testicular cancer, and those who had an undescended testicle at birth. Monthly self-examinations for lumps are crucial, as often there are no other symptoms in the early stages. If cancer is confirmed by a physician, the affected testicle usually is surgically removed. The remaining, healthy testicle, in most cases, can produce sufficient sperm and hormone levels for normal functioning.
Self-Examination of Testicles

After a hot shower or bath, when the scrotum is relaxed, gently grasp a testicle and slowly roll it between your thumb and forefinger. Check for any lumps on the surface of the testicle. Also check for any change in size, shape, or consistency, or for increased sensitivity. Repeat for the other testicle. If you find a lump or any other change, consult your physician as soon as possible.

Enlarged Prostate

The prostate gland surrounds the urethra, the tube that carries urine from your bladder out of the body. While the prostate becomes enlarged in nearly all men over age 50, in one of every 10 men this enlargement constricts the urethra, making urination difficult or, in extreme cases, blocking the flow of urine altogether. African-American men are especially prone to this condition.

The National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases says you should look for these symptoms of prostate enlargement:

- Frequent urination
- Difficulty in starting flow of urine
- Decreased force and thickness of urine stream
- Sleeplessness due to need to urinate at night
- Dribbling after the end of urination

Report these symptoms to your physician, who will conduct appropriate testing.

Prostate Cancer

Except for skin cancer, prostate cancer is the most common type of cancer among American men. The following are considered at-risk groups: all men over 50 (especially African-Americans), men with a family history of prostate cancer, and those with a high-fat diet, according to the National Cancer Institute.

All men should consult their doctor to assess their potential risk and discuss an appropriate screening strategy. Periodic screenings using a digital rectal exam or a prostate specific antigen test may detect prostate cancer in its early stages.

If prostate cancer is confirmed, surgical removal of the organ is not always necessary. Doctors will determine if the disease is limited to the prostate and recommend further treatment as needed.

Colon and Rectal Problems

Cancer of the colon or rectum is the third most common form of cancer among American men. Several tests are used to screen for colorectal cancer. They include a digital rectal exam, a fecal occult blood test (to look for blood in the stool), sigmoidoscopy (examination of the lower colon with a thin and flexible scope), barium enema with air contrast and colonoscopy (examination of the entire colon).

The ACS recommends that men 50 and older have a yearly fecal occult blood test and a sigmoidoscopy every five years.

Krames Staywell

For more information on men’s health, please visit:
http://www.menshealthmonth.org/week/index.html
http://wellnesswrp.personaladvantage.com/content?sub=10000233