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## Accident Prevention

Accidental injuries occur more often later in life and tend to result in more serious injuries; therefore, attention to safety is especially important for older people. Older people have more accidents due to deteriorating eyesight and poor hearing. In addition, neurological diseases, and balance problems can make older people unsteady.

When accidents occur, older people are often severely injured and tend to heal slowly. Many accidents can be prevented by staying in good mental and physical health and by improving safety habits.

Falls are the most common cause of fatal injury in older people. Following are some safety tips:

- Light all stairways. Put light switches at both the bottom and top of stairs.
- Use bedside remote-control light switches or night lights.
- Be sure both sides of stairways have sturdy handrails.
- Tack down carpeting on stairs and use non-skid treads.
- Remove throw rugs that tend to slide.
- Arrange furniture and other objects so they are not obstacles.
- Use grab bars on bathroom walls and non-skid mats or strips in the bathtub.
- Keep outdoor steps and walkways in good repair.

Personal health is also important in preventing falls. Because older people tend to become faint or dizzy when standing quickly, experts recommend rising slowly from a sitting or lying position. Both illness and the side effects of medications increase the risks of falls.