

# Safety

## SAFETY IN THE HOME ENVIRONMENT

### Preventing Falls

Client falls are the most commonly reported accident in home health. Here are some pointers to prevent falls:

- Keep your home brightly lit to avoid tripping on objects that are hard to see
- Clear clutter such as books, magazines, newspapers, toys, boxes, etc. from walkways and halls
- Store clothing, dishes, food, and other necessities within easy reach
- Make sure electric and phone cords are out of the way
- Clean spilled liquids, food, or grease immediately
- Use tacks, double-backed carpet tape, or slip resistant backing to keep area rugs in place
- Remove area rugs from the bathroom and kitchen
- Install nonskid treads on stairs
- Always use hand railings on steps and stairs
- Repair loose, wooden floorboards and/or worn carpeting right away
- In the bathroom, apply non-slip strips or use non-slip mats in the shower and tub
- Use grab bars in the shower and tub and next to the toilet seat
- Use a bath seat in the shower or tub
- Use a raised toilet seat
- Discuss your health conditions with your practitioner because some eye and/or ear disorders and limited mobility may increase your risk of falling
- Ask your practitioner or pharmacist to review your medications for side effects and/or interactions that may increase your risk of falling

### General Safety Tips for Oxygen Safety in the Home

Oxygen is safe when used properly. Oxygen will not explode or burn; but, it will cause anything that is burning to burn hotter and faster. Follow these basic rules to create a safe environment for using oxygen.

- **Never smoke or allow anyone else to smoke around oxygen!**
- Post NO SMOKING signs in every room of your home where oxygen is in use
- Keep oxygen canisters at least five (5) to ten (10) feet away from any heat source
- Avoid using lotions, creams, or other home care products containing petroleum because these are flammable products; use water-based products instead such as Cetaphil, K-Y, Lubriderm, Neutrogena
- Store oxygen canisters safely and securely in a well-vented area and in an upright position away from any kind of heat source, including the sun
- Turn your oxygen supply valve to the off position when oxygen is not in use
- Don't use anything that may cause a spark around your oxygen like electric heaters, electric blankets, electric razors, electric hair dryers, or friction toys
- Install and maintain smoke detectors in your home
- Keep a fire extinguisher nearby; a medium-sized multi-purpose Dry Chemical extinguisher is recommended
- Notify the power company you are oxygen dependent