



**THREE THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT UNIVERSAL DESIGN**

- 1. It's good for everyone**-a universally designed home works well for all
- 2. It's especially important as we age**-UD features make it easier for us to adjust to physical changes in strength, flexibility, balance & reach, to be able to live in our environment without barriers for a lifetime
- 3. It's easy to incorporate into your home**-a bathroom or kitchen remodel is a great time to incorporate universal design elements, even if it's just changing faucets and handles

**Baby boomers that expect to age in place**

63%

expect to age in place<sup>5</sup>

39%

plan for major home improvement in the next three years<sup>5</sup>



**HOME & BATHROOM MODIFICATION: KEEPING YOUR HOME SAFE**

There's no place like home, and for some...no place is safer. However, the home is where many injuries occur, and most of these are due to falls.

- Falls are the leading cause of injury among Canadians 65+
  - 20-30% of seniors experience one or more falls each year
  - Falls are the cause of 85% of seniors' injury-related hospitalizations
  - Falls are the cause of 95% of all hip fractures, leading to death in 20% of cases
  - 50% of all falls at home causes hospitalization 10+ days, & 33% need LTC facilities after being released
  - 50-70% of falls occur in the bathroom and on stairs
- (source: PHAC)

As we age, our risk of falling becomes greater, but by taking simple measures, you can prevent your chances of being injured at home and continue your independent living at home... in your own space.

**Consider these modifications:**

**No/Low-cost:**

- remove or secure area rugs
- remove clutter/obstacles in high-traffic areas
- ensure all rooms/hallways are well lit & a night-light in bathrooms
- place a chair at the entrance to remove shoes/boots
- ensure you have an emergency call list near all phones
- ensure non-skid surface on stairs
- don't rush going up/down stairs
- ensure fire/carbon monoxide detector is in working order
- ensure step stools in kitchen/bathroom are stable
- ensure pots/pans & regularly used items are within knee-shoulder height

**Small to Mid Cost:**

- install grab bars & ensure they are properly placed and well anchored
- choose slip-resistant, low-glare flooring when replacing
- maximize doorway widths (36")
- replace door handles with levers
- install extra lighting in near bathtubs & showers
- install a 17" right-height toilet
- install a walk-in tub with seat
- select single-lever faucets
- create clearance beneath sink, or install a wall-hung sink/vanity
- ensure a walk-in shower has no more than 1/2" threshold, and 36" access

**Higher Cost:**

- widen hallways or remove walls to create open floor space of 3'-4' around appliances/cabinets
- relocate light switches to 42"-48" above floor
- eliminate floor thresholds for easy access to each room
- modify kitchen cabinets & provide multi-level counter heights for ease of use during tasks
- consider pull-down cabinets

