

PREPARING YOUR HOME

Making Your Home Accessible After Surgery

Making your home “recovery friendly” can be fun and easy. Knowing your home is ready for you after surgery may bring you relief, and it may also allow you to be more productive during your recovery.

Safety First

A good rule of thumb is to think safety first, then comfort. Some key steps that we will discuss in this lesson include:

- Floor and furniture prep
- Establishing a recovery center
- Preparing your bathroom
- Creating an accessible home entrance

Prepare Your Floors

How are your floors? You want to make sure everything is secure and there are no tripping hazards.

Floor Prep

We recommend that you: Remove area rugs you could slip on and repair any loose carpeting. Make sure to secure floor mats with non-skid backing. Get some brightly-colored, non-skid tape and make your floors colorful! Mark any steps or slopes. Also, make sure to securely fasten phone and electric cords around the outside walls of the room. Check stairways for when you're okay to bear weight on your limb. Are there secure handrails?

Rearrange your home

Clear the way and make a path! Rearrange your furniture to allow for clear walking paths.

Home Rearrangement

Where would you like to sleep during recovery? Pick a first-floor room to convert into a temporary bedroom and arrange the necessary furniture accordingly. Can you easily move through your doorways? Temporarily remove doors that are too narrow or that are heavy or hard to open. Eliminate clutter. Clear countertops and organize often-used items so you don't need to reach up or bend down. You can install slide-out shelving, adjustable rods, baskets and other closet organizers to stay organized.

Lighting

It's time to light it up! Be sure you have good lighting to see where you're going. Also, add nightlights wherever you may walk at night.

Recovery Center

Choose a space where you will spend most of your time during the day – a favorite easy chair or perhaps the sofa. This will be your “recovery center”. Make sure your favorite and most used items are within reach, like: remote controls, box of tissues, wastebasket, reading material. When you begin home recovery, you can add your: cell phone, reading glasses and / or contact lens case, medications, instructions from your doctor. Set up similar recovery centers in the: bedroom, kitchen, bathroom, any other room where you spend time. Remember, time spent now will make your time recovering at home much easier.

Bathroom Recovery Center

It is important to give your bathrooms a close look, since you will have limited mobility and want to avoid any falls. A little prep can go a long way in helping you move around in the bathroom! First, install grab bars in the shower (for when you are cleared to shower with your frame), by the tub, and near the toilet. Second, install an elevated toilet seat to help you sit down and stand up.

Home Entrance

You'll be so excited to come home from the hospital. You will probably have that “home sweet home” feeling! So it is important to make sure your home entrance is well lit and easy to access. Make sure to choose the entrance with the fewest steps to your main living area. If you have steps into your house, consider installing a firm handrail on either or both sides. To help minimize the risk of falling, create a clear path from the passenger side of your vehicle to your chosen entrance. Also, ensure there is enough outside lighting, in case you come home in the evening. Remember, preparing your home ahead of time may help bring relief, knowing your home is safer and recovery ready!