

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS & HOME SAFETY INFORMATION

Complete Care has a comprehensive emergency preparedness plan in case a disaster occurs. Disasters may include fire to our facility, chemical spills in the community, hurricanes, tornadoes and community evacuations. Our primary goal is to continue to service your health care needs. It is your responsibility to contact us regarding any supplies you may require when there is a threat of disaster or inclement weather so that you have enough supplies to sustain you.

If a disaster occurs, follow instructions from the civil authorities in your area. We will utilize every resource available to continue to service you. However, there may be circumstances where we cannot meet your needs due to the scope of the disaster. In that case, you must utilize the resources of your local rescue or medical facility. We will work closely with authorities to ensure your safety.

Your local county provides a voluntary Special Needs Program for disabled citizens who have no alternative to public shelter or need transportation to a shelter in the event of an emergency. Our staff are happy to assist you with registration upon request or you may visit your local county's emergency preparedness website to register. Registration should be completed in advance of an emergency or disaster to allow counties to prepare.

HOME SAFETY INFORMATION

Here are some helpful guidelines to help you keep a careful eye on your home and maintain safe habits. Correct unsafe conditions before they cause an accident. Take responsibility and keep your home safe.

Medicines

- If children are in the home, store medications and poisons in childproof containers and out of reach.
- All medicines should be labeled clearly and left in original containers.
- Do not give or take medicines that were prescribed for other people.
- When taking or giving medicines, read the label and measure doses carefully. Know the side effects of the medicines you are taking.

- Throw away outdated medicines by pouring down a sink or flushing down the toilet.
- Take your unwanted drugs to your local pharmacy.

Mobility items

When using mobility items to get around such as; canes, walkers, wheelchairs, or crutches you should use extra care to prevent slips and falls.

- Use extreme care to avoid using walkers, canes, or crutches on slippery or wet surfaces.
- Always put the wheelchairs or seated walkers in the lock position when standing up or before sitting down.
- Wear shoes when using these items and try to avoid obstacles in your path and soft and uneven surfaces.

Slips and Falls

Slip and falls are the most common and often the most serious accidents in the home. Here are some things you can do to prevent them in your home.

- Arrange furniture to avoid an obstacle course
- Install handrails on all stairs, showers, bathtubs and toilets.
- Keep stairs clear and well lit. • Place rubber mats or grids in showers and bath tubs.
- Use bath benches or shower chairs if you have muscle weakness, shortness of breath, or dizziness.
- Wipe up all spilled water, oil, or grease immediately.
- Pick-up and keep surprises out from under foot, including electrical cords and throw rugs.
- Keep tubing under your control. Tubing may catch on furniture, doors, knobs, throw rugs, or other items on floor.
- Keep drawers and cabinets closed.
- Install good lighting to avoid groping in the dark.

Lifting

If it is too big, too heavy, or too awkward to move alone – GET HELP. Here are some things you can do to prevent low back pain or injury.

- Stand close to the load with your feet apart for good balance.
- Bend your knees and “straddle” the load.
- Keep your back as straight as possible while you lift and carry the load.
- Avoid twisting your body when carrying a load.

Fire

Pre-plan and practice your fire escape. Prepare a plan with at least two ways out of your home. If your fire exit is through a window, make sure it opens easily. If you are in an apartment, know where the exit stairs are located. Do not use the elevator in a fire emergency. You may notify the fire department ahead of time if you have a disability or special needs. Here are some steps to prevent fires:

- Install smoke detectors. They are your best early warning. Test frequently and change the battery every year.
- Throw away old newspapers, magazines and boxes.
- Empty wastebaskets and trashcans regularly.
- When there is oxygen in use, place a “No Smoking” sign in plain view of all persons entering the home and do not permit anyone to smoke near the patient.
- Do not allow ashtrays or used matches to be tossed into wastebaskets unless you know they are out. Wet down first or dump into toilet.
- Have your chimney and fireplace checked frequently. Look for and repair cracks and loose mortar. Keep paper, wood, and rugs away from area where sparks could hit them.
- Be careful when using space heaters.
- Follow instructions when using heating pad to avoid serious burns.
- Check your furnace and pipes regularly. If nearby walls or ceilings feel hot, add insulation.
- Keep a fire extinguisher in your home and know how to use it.

If you have a fire or suspect fire:

1. Take immediate action per plan – escape is your top priority.
2. Get help on the way – with no delay. CALL 9-1-1.
3. If your fire escape is cut-off, close the door and seal the cracks to hold back smoke. Signal help from the window.

Watch for early warning signs – e.g. overheating, a burning smell, sparks. Unplug the appliance and get it checked right away. Here are some things you can do to prevent electrical accidents.

- Keep cords and electrical appliances away from water.
- Do not plug cords under rugs, through doorways or near heaters. Check cords for damage before use.
- Extension cords must have a big enough wire for larger appliances.
- If you have a broken plug, outlet, or wire, get it fixed right away.
- Use a ground on 3-wire plugs to prevent shock in case of electrical “fault.”
- Do not overload outlets with too many plugs.
- Use three-prong adapters when necessary.

Smell Gas?

- Open windows and doors.
- Shut off the appliance involved. You may be able to refer to the front of your telephone book for instructions regarding turning off the gas to your home.
- Don't use matches, light candles or turn on electrical switches.
- Don't use telephone – dialing may create electrical sparks.
- Call the Gas Company from a neighbor's home.
- If your gas company offers free annual inspections, take advantage of them.