The left side of the slide features a decorative design consisting of several vertical stripes of varying widths and colors, ranging from light beige to a darker tan. Overlaid on these stripes are several circles of different sizes, also in shades of tan and beige, arranged in a cluster that tapers towards the bottom.

# **AGING IN PLACE /LIVING SAFELY**

**Jina P. Lewallen, PhD, MA, LCSW**

# AGING IN PLACE



- Many of us plan to stay home for as long as possible as we age.

Assessing the home, making modifications can help keep your loved one safe at home. This lecture talks about safety concerns for the caregiver/family of a person with dementia and some tips on how to make your home safer.



# HOME SAFE HOME



- When a loved one has been diagnosed with dementia, the concerns of keeping them at home can be challenging.
- Keeping a loved one safe at home with support and care can help the loved one keep active as dementia progresses.



# ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

- Safety and comfort measures in the home are essential in preventing falls or accidents.
- Modifications should be done as early as possible as some persons with dementia have difficulty adapting to change.



# SAFETY AT HOME

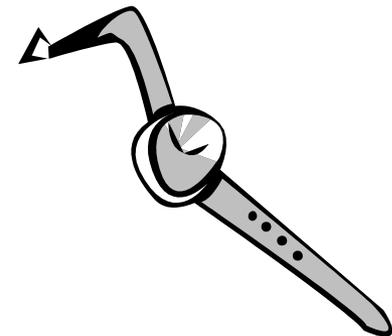
- Let us consider some tips for helping your loved on stay safe while continuing to live at home.



# SAFETY IN THE HOME 101

## ○ Considerations include:

- Medical alert or a buddy system- this insures the older person that help is always one button push away.
- For those with dementia, a buddy system would be more appropriate. Someone- neighbor, family member, caregiver that is responsible for checking on the older person during the day/night.



# KEEPING SAFE AT HOME

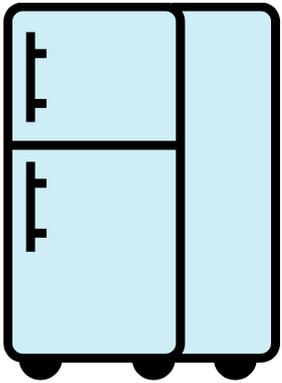


- Fire Extinguisher and smoke detector on every floor.

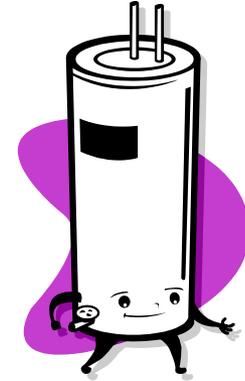
**\*\* For those older persons who smoke- please ask them to stop...but if not, use extreme caution when they are smoking and never allow them to smoke alone or in bed.**



# HOME SAFETY



- Turn the hot water heater down to 120\* Fahrenheit or below to avoid scalds.
- Mark hot and cold water faucets clearly
- Post emergency numbers by phone (on the fridge)
- Cover unused outlets



# KITCHEN PRECAUTIONS

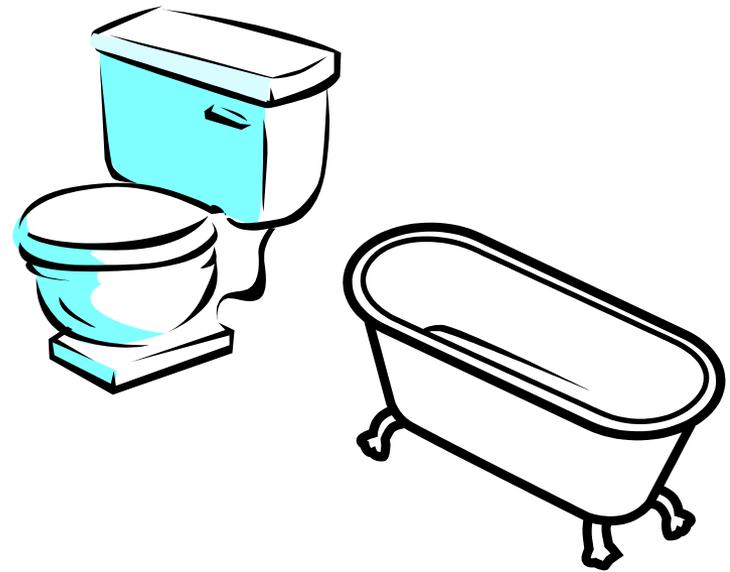


- Knives, toasters, grill keep in closed cabinets
- Locks, if warranted, on cabinets, fridge
- Cover for the garbage disposal
- If warranted, remove controls on the stove, oven and cover burners
- Keep a lid on the trash can
- Keep floor clean, dry, clutter free
- Store hazardous items separate from food.
- Check expiration dates on food.
- Use a kettle with automatic shut off



# BATHROOM SAFETY

- ❖ Proper storage of and use of:
- ❖ Razors, shavers, blow dryers
- ❖ Cosmetics, perfumes
- ❖ Non-skid mats in tub, shower and on the floor
- ❖ Always monitor water temperature
- ❖ If possible, only bathe/shower when help is available
- ❖ Use non-glare 100 watt or greater light in all rooms including the bathroom.
- ❖ Use safety rails, shower /bath chair





## DRUG SAFETY

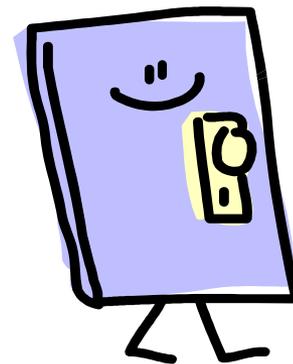


- Review medications frequently with the doctor or pharmacist and when you take new medication
- Make sure all medicines are labeled correctly
- Read medicine labels in good light to ensure you are taking the right medicine and the correct dose
- Dispose of any old or used medicines
- NEVER borrow prescription drugs from others
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist before you mix alcohol and your medicines
- Check with your doctor before mixing non-prescription (OTC) and prescription drugs

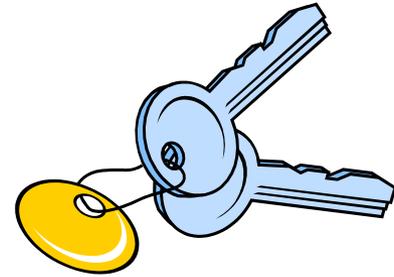
# VISUAL AIDS IN THE HOME



- Night lights placed throughout the home
- Keep a light on in the bathroom
- Cover door knobs or use childproof knobs on doors
- Use black or bright colored tape to identify the door, or steps.



# WANDERING BEHAVIORS



- Keep windows and doors locked
- Use of a security beeper/identification bracelet or necklace for your loved one to wear
- Never leave a person at home unattended, particularly in the mid to late stages of dementia



# WANDERING BEHAVIORS



- Place locks high up or down low on doors as persons with dementia won't know to look.
- Keep a recent picture of your loved one with you, maybe give the neighbors or police in case your loved one leaves the house unattended.
- Arrange furniture so your loved one can wander around the house easily

