



Quinte and District Rehabilitation Inc.  
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## Kitchen Safety Handout

Here are some ideas to make your kitchen a safer place for you and your family.

### Meal Preparation Safety

- Have plenty of light at work areas, especially where food is cut and prepared.
- Ensure the "on" and "off" positions on the stove dials are clearly marked.
- Turn pot handles inward when cooking to prevent catching your clothes on them.
- Use oven mitts / potholders to remove hot items from stove or microwave. Use a timer to remind you when food is ready.
- Ensure your hands are clean and dry before handling electrical appliances. All electrical outlets that are not used should be covered with safety covers.
- Store knives and other sharp items in a safe area. Store food items separate from household cleaners. Store heavy items in lower cupboards.
- Remember proper hand washing between meal preparation steps. Ensure meal prep surfaces are kept clean. Pay special attention to proper handling and preparing of raw meat. Keep raw meat separate from vegetables and other food items. Rinse your vegetables well before preparing them.
- Wear supportive footwear in the kitchen. Use a sturdy, safe stool for rest breaks.

### Prevent Falls in Your Kitchen

- Eliminate tripping hazards, such as throw rugs/mats. Ensure you keep kitchen cabinets, doors and drawers closed when not in use. Wipe up any spills and pick up any dropped food peelings immediately to prevent slipping.
- Do not stand on a chair to reach things. Store frequently used objects where they can be easily reached. If you must climb, use a stable stepping stool with a safety rail as long as you have no balance issues. Use a Reacher if bending is difficult.
- Take care not to trip over your pets, pet toys or any other unexpected obstacles.

### Prevent Kitchen Fires

- Change the batteries in your smoke detector(s) and carbon monoxide detector(s) every six months and checked monthly that they are in proper working order.
- Ensure you are using only microwave safe containers for microwave cooking.
- Keep potholders, dishtowels and plastic bags away from the stove to reduce fire risks. Keep a pot lid nearby the stove to smother flames should pot catch on fire.
- Keep a fire extinguisher handy and review its use routinely.

### General Safety Tips

- Medication bottles, regardless of where they are kept, need to be clearly labeled and their storage area should be cleaned out regularly and properly dispose of any expired medication. Keep all medication out of reach of children.
- Keep a list of emergency phone numbers, including poison control next to each phone.



# HOME SAFETY AND MOBILITY TIPS FOR PEOPLE WITH LOW VISION OR PARTIAL VISION

## General Safety Tips

- **Remind your family to keep furniture in the same place and to put kitchen and other items back in their places.**
- **Keep cabinets and closet doors either fully closed or fully open. Doors left partially open are unsafe. Place contrasting tape on the insides or backs of cabinet doors to help identify one that is open.**
- **Thresholds and edges of steps can be difficult to see. Use contrasting paint, safety tape or tread strips to highlight these areas. Install a railing for safety.**
- **Door knobs can be marked with a piece of yarn, tape or a rubber band to help identify a particular room or apartment door.**
- **Consider using a walker should you require stability during walking. White mobility canes can be attached to the walker, so both mobility aids can be with you.**

## Lighting

- **Rooms should be well lit with additional task lighting near the activity being completed.**
- **A well illuminated room should eliminate shadows.**
- **When writing place a lamp on the opposite side of the hand being used to prevent shadows.**



- **To reduce glare ensure that floors and tabletops are not shiny.**
- **Position lighting so it shines on the floors, steps, and railings.**

## **Kitchen Area**

- **Push chairs under the kitchen table when not sitting on them.**
- **Paint cabinet doors to contrast with the countertop. Install contrasting coloured knobs or handles.**
- **Use contrasting plates, tablecloths, placemats, and napkins. Use a cutting board that contrasts with the colour of the food item on it.**
- **When purchasing appliances and devices look for those with control buttons or dials. They can be marked or labeled and may make them easier to use than digital displays.**
- **Install counter-level outlets for better access.**
- **Place tall milk and juice containers in the back of the refrigerator to reduce the risk of knocking them over when reaching inside.**
- **Think Sense-ibly. Tactile exploration can greatly help with determining the contents of a container, or when using an appliance or other piece of equipment. For example, cream soups sound and feel different than noodle soups. When you shake the can, the noodle soup will splash and feel looser inside the can.**



## Living room

- **Arrange furniture to accommodate your normal route.**
- **Place white dollies on the arms and backs of chairs.**
- **Place a design on your footstool so it contrasts with the carpet.**
- **Remove rugs or use non-skid rubber backing or double-sided tape.**
- **Put white tape around the TV remote control.**
- **Use a dial or digital thermostat with large display.**

## Bedroom

- **Organize clothes by colour or by matching outfits. Use a safety pin to distinguish black from navy. Identify garments by feeling details such as textures and style.**
- **Use a talking alarm clock.**

## Bathroom

- **Select brightly coloured towels to contrast with your walls. Use contrasting colours for accessories like toilet seat covers.**
- **Install grab bars in the bathtub for safety. Use a non-skid rubber mat in the tub or shower.**
- **Use a bath chair and hand-held showerhead should you have difficulties getting up from the bottom of the tub for bathing.**



- **Use a raised toilet seat to increase your ease and safety getting off the toilet.**
- **Consider purchasing a talking weight scale or one with a waist-high dial.**
- **Use coloured soap that contrasts with your tub or liquid soap.**

### **Quick Computer Tips**

- **Most computer operating systems and internet browsers allow you to increase the size of web pages and text on your computer screen to make them more visible.**
- **Third-party screen magnification software displays not just larger text on your screen but also larger icons, mouse pointers and other navigation items.**
- **Some people with low vision prefer using keyboard commands instead of a mouse. Impaired vision can make it more difficult to precisely position the cursor on the screen with a mouse.**
- **Screen reader programs convert both text and icons to speech.**

### **Quick Television Tips**

- **Avoid glare shining on the TV from a window or light.**
- **Consider using closed captions.**
- **Consider purchasing a high-definition (HD) TV and other digital viewing enhancement options.**



- **Move closer to a smaller TV rather than closer to a larger TV to see a whole object like a person's face, not just their nose.**
- **Adjust the contrast on the TV so that colours are either very bright or only black and white.**

## **Tips For Managing Medication**

- **Use colour-coding, raised dots, or large print to mark medication containers.**
- **Wrap rubber bands around the bottle. Remove one rubber band each time you take your medicine and start again the next day.**
- **Consider a pill organizer with an auditory alarm to alert when the next dose is required.**
- **Write in large print or record on cassette important information about each drug, including the dosage, time to take it, side effects, etc.**
- **Ask your pharmacist for large print labels or printed material with large font.**

## **Hobbies**

- **Playing cards, crossword puzzles, and some board games come in low vision versions.**



## Telephones

- **Big-button phones make it easier to dial and large-print address books make it easier to read addresses and telephone numbers.**

## More General Tips

- **Keep your eyeglasses in a bright or light-coloured case so you can locate them more easily in a bag or briefcase.**
- **Use contrast on your keys to differentiate them from one another; adhere a bright piece of tape on your main house key for easier location.**
- **When traveling, most people use black, dark brown or grey luggage. Consider using brightly coloured luggage (e.g., red, yellow). It will stand out from the others on the carousel.**

## Summary of Tips

- **Use your imagination when marking, labeling and contrasting items in your home. Make sure you participate in making changes so that you are comfortable with the new accommodation.**
- **Understand that often there are psychological implications to vision loss. Validate your need to come to terms with what your vision loss means to you. Do not hide your feelings about your vision loss.**



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**Identify them and seek help from your health care professionals and Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB).**

- **The local CNIB Office:**  
**Bayview Mall 470 Dundas St E, Unit 8 Belleville, ON K8N 1G1**  
**Phone: 1-800-563-2642**  
**Website: [www.cnib.ca](http://www.cnib.ca)**
- **Vision Loss Rehabilitation Ontario (VLRO) is a provincially funded CNIB health care organization that provides personalized vision rehab. For referral information, please contact VLRO:**  
**Phone: 1-844-887-8572**  
**Website: <https://on.visionlossrehab.ca>**





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## Memory Strategies

The following are a list of generalized memory strategies. Each person is an individual and therefore one strategy that might work well for one person may not for another. It is important to allow yourself enough time to try each strategy more than once. Keep track of what strategies worked for you and what did not work.

1. Use a calendar or day planner to write down appointments, important dates, birthdays, etc. Place the calendar in a visible location and get into the routine of checking it daily.
2. Keep a “to do” list in a visible location (e.g. kitchen counter). Write down things that you want to accomplish and when completed check or cross the item off. Some people find it useful to have a weekly “to do” list that can be separated into days.
3. Use reminder signs around the home, for example, “Turn off stove” placed over the stove top; “Take medications” in the bathroom”; or a list of important things to check before leaving the home, which could be placed on the back of the front door, “Turn off stove, lights turned off, back door locked, etc”.
4. Keep a list of emergency contact people and numbers in a familiar and visible place for you (e.g. on the fridge or by the phone).
5. Get into a routine that works for you, for example, when you first get up in the morning checking your calendar, followed by making your breakfast and taking your medications. Some people find it helpful to write down a daily routine.
6. Have set locations for essential items, such as your keys and medication. Remember, there should be “a place for everything and everything in its place”.
7. Make a list of questions/comments that you want to cover for any upcoming appointments with your family doctor/medical specialists
8. Exercise your mind. We continue to exercise our bodies, and it is important to continue to exercise our minds. The following are some examples: crosswords, word searches, puzzles, brain teasers, playing cards or board games, learning something new (e.g. card game, knitting, using computer, etc.), reading, watching the news and discussing it with family members or friends later on. Get into the routine of exercising your mind on a daily basis.