



Patient Handbook



Please read this handbook and keep it in a safe place. It has important instructions on how to get your medicine delivered in case there is an emergency. Let us know if you have any questions about the information in this handbook.



Welcome

to Orsini Specialty Pharmacy

Dear Valued Patient,

Welcome to Orsini Specialty Pharmacy. We're excited to serve your specialty pharmacy needs. We understand that there's a lot to learn about your medical condition and a lot to do to care for yourself. We're here to help.

We will give you personalized service to help you get the most benefit from your medicine. We'll be in contact with your doctor and your health insurance company. Our services include:

- Access to a health professional 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Help knowing exactly what your insurance covers.
- Help getting financial assistance when available.
- Monthly reminders to refill your prescriptions.
- Unmarked package delivery at a time and place that you need it.
- Enrollment in the Orsini Patient Management Program, which can help you:
 - * Understand and follow the schedule for taking your medicine.
 - * Manage side effects from your medicine.
 - * Learn about ways to feel better during and after you take your medicine.

You can also visit www.orsinispecialtypharmacy.com to learn more about our programs. Or give us a call—we're available 24 hours a day, 7 days per week.

Phone: 1-800-410-8575
Fax: 1-847-879-9551
Email: patientcare@orsinihc.com

Translation, interpreter and/or telephone access services are available at no extra cost.

If your issue is a medical emergency, please CALL 9-1-1.

We look forward to providing you the best service possible. We know you have choices, and we thank you for choosing the Orsini Specialty Pharmacy Care Team.

Sincerely,

Your Orsini Specialty Pharmacy Care Team

Orsini Specialty Pharmacy Care Team 1-800-410-8575

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An organization accredited through ACHC, The Joint Commission, URAC and NABP.



About Orsini Specialty Pharmacy

Orsini Specialty Pharmacy is a national specialty pharmacy that provides care to patients that require specialty drugs to treat complex medical conditions.

Our Mission Statement

Orsini is an innovative company grounded on putting people first. Our simple mission provides us a rewarding journey dedicating ourselves to improving the lives of those who entrust their care to us - our patients, our partners, our employees and our community.

How We Can Help You

Orsini partners with specialty drug manufacturers and builds personalized programs designed to help you.

The medicines we supply may be oral (a pill, tablet, or powder), inhaled (breathed in), injectable (a shot), infused (with an IV bag) or topical (on the skin). These specialty medicines need extra care as we work with your health insurance plan to see what your copay is, show you how to take the medicine the right way, and store and ship the medicine in special boxes to keep it the right temperature.

For a list of the health conditions we treat and the medicines we provide, please see the *Centers of Excellence* and *Patients/Quick Links/Specialty Drugs* sections located on our website at www.orsinispecialtypharmacy.com.

How to Contact Your Specialty Pharmacy Care Team

Phone: 1-800-410-8575

Fax: 1-847-879-9551

Email: patientcare@orsinihc.com

A healthcare expert is available by phone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for emergency pharmacy services.

Translation, interpreter and/or telephone access services are available at no extra cost.

If your issue is a medical emergency, please CALL 9-1-1 right away.

Emergency and Disaster Readiness Plan

If there's a natural disaster or other emergency where you live, and you need to leave your home for a while, please contact our pharmacy right away to let us know where you're staying so we'll know where to deliver your next shipment of medicine. We want to make sure that you don't run out of medicine during this time. If you can't call us, please send updated information to us at patientcare@orsinihc.com. Once the emergency is over, please let us know when you return home so we can restart deliveries to your home.

Orsini also has an emergency readiness plan to help us continue to service you in case a disaster occurs near our building. Our goal at all times is to make sure nothing keeps your medicines from getting to you. When there is a threat of disaster, we'll do everything we can to make sure you have the medicine you need.

Here are some important things to know in case of a disaster or other emergency:

1. Orsini monitors our local weather and will aim to call you 3-5 days before a forecasted weather emergency in our area so we can arrange for a shipment before a weather emergency occurs.
2. If you learn that your local area is forecasted to have an extreme weather event, please call Orsini 3-5 days before it's expected to happen. After receiving this notice from you, Orsini will send your medicine by FedEx next day delivery so that you have it on hand before any expected severe weather emergencies.
3. If Orsini can't get your medicine to you before a severe weather event happens, we'll find out if there's a specialty pharmacy near you that can ship it to you, so you will not be without your medicine.
4. If a local disaster happens and we can't reach you and you can't reach us, please listen to your local news and rescue centers for advice on getting your medicine. Contact your doctor or local hospital immediately if you're going to miss a dose of your medicine. Go to the hospital right away if your medicine is life sustaining or would cause harm if missed.
5. Orsini asks that all patients give us a second emergency phone number in case we can't reach you at the first number.
6. If you have a personal emergency (for example, a house fire) and you need your medicine, please contact Orsini as soon as you can so we can get medicine to you in time for your next dose.



Patient Services

Dedicated Therapy Care Team

Orsini Specialty Pharmacy has a dedicated Therapy Care Team to work with patients taking the same medicine as you. Your therapy Care Team is led by a pharmacist who is specially trained in the medicines prescribed to treat your medical condition. Working with the pharmacists, our patient care coordinators will speak with you and your doctor's office to make sure we have the information we need to fill your prescription. They will answer your questions and explain how to take and store your medicine the right way. Our Care Team members will also check in with you to see how you're doing.

Your Care Team will:

- Tell you about the medicine that's been prescribed for you.
- Review the other medicines you are taking to make sure your prescribed medicine may be taken with them.
- Work with you to schedule your medicine deliveries so they arrive when and where you need them.
- Let you know the status of your medicine delivery.
- Talk to you about how your medicine therapy is going.
- Ask if you have any questions for the pharmacist and connect you with one if you do.

Someone from our clinician team (pharmacists, nurses, pharmacy technicians) is available to answer your questions 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Give us a call at 1-800-410-8575.

Patient Management Program

Orsini's patient management programs are designed to help you manage side effects, stay on schedule with your medicine, and improve your overall health when you follow the treatment plan determined by you and your doctor and our pharmacy. If you are part of our patient management program, we'll monitor your medicines and progress through a plan that is developed for patients with your medical condition. This service is provided to you at no extra cost, and your participation is voluntary. If you no longer wish to participate in our patient management program, just contact our team by phone and let them know.

Access to Our Nursing Network

Orsini Specialty Pharmacy has a nationwide nursing network so, if your medicine needs to be given by a registered nurse, we can help arrange for a nurse to come to your home. Your patient care coordinator will know if your medicine needs to be given by a nurse. If it does, you'll be connected with a nursing coordinator to help you:

- Locate a nursing professional in your area.
- Make sure that the nurses who will take care of you have received training with your specific medicine.
- Arrange the first nursing visit and give you information to schedule future visits.

Dedicated Reimbursement Specialists

Orsini has dedicated reimbursement specialists to help you get your medicines at the lowest possible cost. Our specialists will:

- Check to see exactly what costs your insurance plan will cover.
- Let you know exactly what costs you will need to pay (copayment).
- Work on prior authorizations, if needed, and submit claim appeals to help you gain insurance coverage, whenever possible, for medicines supplied by our pharmacy.
- Help find other financial assistance programs, if you need help paying for your medicine.

Orsini accepts credit cards, checks, and most flexible spending accounts (FSAs) as forms of payment.

When a Generic Substitute Will Be Used

Sometimes it's necessary to substitute generic medicine for brand name medicine. This could happen because your doctor or insurance company prefers the generic be dispensed. If a substitution needs to be made, a patient care coordinator will contact you before shipping the medicine to let you know about the substitution.

Adult Signature is Required for Delivery of Your Medicine

We deliver your medicine to your home, workplace, doctor's office, neighbor, or to a different place that you choose, at no cost to you. We'll schedule all shipments with you to make sure that you, or

another adult, are available to sign for the shipment when it gets there. In the event a signature is not possible upon delivery of your medication, Orsini will have a member statement sent to you to sign and return to us.

Shipping and Logistics Team

Orsini has a dedicated shipping and logistics team to handle the special packing, shipping and delivery needs for your medicine.

- Our team members are trained to properly package and ship room temperature, refrigerated and ultra-cold (frozen) medicines to you so that they will stay at the right temperature during shipping.
- We will also send you other supplies with your medication, such as a sharps container, as requested.
- Normal delivery service covers Tuesday through Friday.
- Some deliveries may be scheduled to arrive on a Saturday, but this is with special approval only.
- We are required to have a signature for all medicine deliveries.
- We track your packages. If your order has not arrived on time, call us and we'll find out why your shipment has not been delivered.

How to Fill a New Prescription at Orsini

Once you and your doctor decide you'll be starting a specialty medicine, your doctor will usually send us the order (prescription) by computer or by fax. We'll work with you and your doctor to get any other information we need to process your order as soon as possible. Orsini will also work with your insurance company to find out exactly what costs are covered and how much your copayment will be. Our staff will keep in touch with you and help you along the way. When your order is complete, we'll call you to set up the delivery of your medicine.

Some medicines have a different process for prescriptions, using what's called a "hub." The hub helps process the prescriptions and can set up other services that you may need while you're taking the medicine. In this case, your doctor may send the prescription to the hub and the hub may contact you for information. Once the prescription gets to Orsini, we'll process the order and call you to set up delivery of your medicine.

When It's Time to Refill Your Prescription

You'll be contacted by an Orsini Specialty Pharmacy patient care coordinator 5-7 days before your refill date. If you'd like to contact us for a refill, look for the Refill Order Contact Card in each package we send to you or call the number at the bottom of the page to begin your refill request.

When Your Prescription Needs to Transfer

If our specialty pharmacy can no longer supply your medicine, a pharmacist will work with you to transfer your prescription to another specialty pharmacy.

If you feel that our specialty pharmacy is unable to meet your needs, we will also work with you to transfer your prescription to another specialty pharmacy.

Help with Concerns or Suspected Errors

We want you to be very satisfied with the care we provide. If you have any issues with your medicine, the services we provide to you, or anything else related to your order, please contact us directly and speak to one of our staff members.

Please contact us as soon as possible if:

- You have any questions or concerns about your medicine.
- You think you have a reaction or allergy to your medicine.
(If your reaction or allergy is a medical emergency, CALL 9-1-1 right away.)
- A change has happened in your medicine use.
- Your contact information or delivery address has changed.
- Your insurance information or payment source has changed.
- You need to check the status of your delivery.
- You need to reschedule or change your delivery.
- You have any questions or concerns about our pharmacy services.



Patient Safety

If You Have a Reaction to Your Medicine

If you're having an uncomfortable or painful side effect or allergic reaction to your medicine, please contact your doctor or our pharmacy as soon as possible. **If your reaction feels like it needs immediate attention, CALL 9-1-1 right away.**

Drug Recalls

If your medicine is recalled, we'll contact you to let you know what to do next, including what information we are told by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the drug manufacturer.

What to Do with Needles and Other Sharp Objects

A "sharps" container will be sent to you by the pharmacy if you'll be taking your medicine as a shot. After taking your shot, place all used needles, syringes, and other sharp objects into the sharps container to keep them away from others. When the sharps container is almost full, simply mail it out in the enclosed prepaid, preaddressed return shipping carton.

What to Do with Your Unused Medicines

For information on what to do with your unused medicines, you can follow these instructions and check the following source websites:

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
			
Mix with an unappealing substance.	Place in a sealed container.	Throw into household trash.	Scratch out personal information.

Source: <https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/where-and-how-dispose-unused-medicines#steps>. Reprint permission not required.



Drug Disposal Options
Do you have medicine you want to get rid of?

Do you have a drug take-back option readily available?
Check the **DEA website**, as well as your local drugstore and police station for possible options.

NO

Is it on the **FDA flush list**?

NO
Follow the **FDA instructions for disposing of medicine in the household trash.**

YES
Immediately flush your medicine in the toilet. Scratch out all personal info on the bottle and recycle/throw it away.

YES
Take your medicine to a drug take-back location.
Do this promptly for **FDA flush list** drugs!

www.fda.gov

Source: <https://www.fda.gov/drugs/safe-disposal-medicines/disposal-unused-medicines-what-you-should-know>. Reprint permission not required.

You can also check with your local waste collection service and police department to see if they host drug disposal events.



Patient Rights & Responsibilities

Orsini Specialty Pharmacy does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, age, religion, creed, ability, marital status, limited English proficiency, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity or expression, illness or method of payment.

Patients and caregivers have the right to voice complaints and/or recommendations on services to the pharmacy. Patients and caregivers can do so by phone, fax, US mail, or email. We will address your concern as soon as possible within 5 business days. Depending on how we receive this information, some responses may take up to 14 days.

Please ask someone on your Care Team if you have any questions about the following patient rights and responsibilities.

Patient Rights – Patients have the right to:

1. Be fully informed in writing of these rights and responsibilities before or at the time of enrollment.
2. Be fully informed in advance about the care or services to be provided, including the scope of services, specific limitations, the providers that furnish care, the frequency of visits and any changes to the plan of care, in terms they can understand.
3. Be informed of patient rights under state law to formulate an advanced directive (patient wishes about medical treatment), if applicable.
4. Choose a healthcare provider, if applicable.
5. Be referred to other healthcare providers, if desired.
6. Be informed of any financial benefits when referred to another organization or provider.
7. Make informed decisions regarding care.
8. Agree to or refuse any part of the provided care plan, after the possible results of refusing care or treatment are fully presented.
9. Know if medical treatment is for the purposes of a clinical study and give their permission or refusal to participate in such experimental research.

10. Be treated with respect and consideration.
11. Receive appropriate care in accordance with physician orders.
12. Be free from mistreatment, neglect, verbal, mental, sexual and physical abuse, and misappropriation of property.
13. An expectation of continuity of care and timely response to requests for care. Orsini has a healthcare professional on call 24 hours a day.
14. Have their communication needs met in their preferred language. (Translation, interpreter and/or telephone access services are available at no extra cost.)
15. Be informed, both verbally and in writing, in advance of care being provided, of the anticipated charges for any care or service, including those services expected from third parties, any charges for which the client/patient will be responsible, and the policy for submitting payments.
16. Assistance with programs related to patient financial assistance and disease state foundation support/outreach programs.
17. Confidentiality and privacy of all information contained in the client/patient records and of Protected Health Information (PHI).
18. Be fully informed of policies and procedures regarding the sharing of PHI.
19. Review and obtain a copy of their medical records upon request.
20. Have grievances/complaints investigated regarding treatment or care that is (or fails to be) furnished, or lack of respect of property, without restraint, interference, coercion, discrimination, fear of termination of care plan or other reprisal.
21. Be able to identify visiting personnel members through proper identification.
22. Be informed of their responsibilities.



Patient Responsibilities – Patients have the responsibility to:

1. Provide complete and accurate information regarding their past medical history, current condition, recent hospitalizations, current or previous medicines, any payers that may cover care and any additional financial information requested.
2. Participate in planning, evaluating and revising their care plan to the degree desired.
3. Adhere to the care plan as understood and agreed to.
4. Ask questions about any part of the care plan they do not understand.
5. Accept consequences for any refusal of treatment or choice of non-compliance, including changes in reimbursement eligibility and/or worsening medical condition.
6. Arrange for supplies, equipment, medicines and other services that Orsini Specialty Pharmacy cannot provide that are necessary for provision of their care and safety.
7. Safeguard the medicine and any other provided supplies/equipment from theft or damage.
8. Use the medicine and other provided supplies/equipment for the purpose for which they were prescribed, following the instructions provided for use, handling, storage, safety and cleaning.
9. Be at home to sign for scheduled deliveries or for nursing visits or notify Orsini in advance to make alternate arrangements.
10. Supply Orsini with all insurance information necessary to obtain reimbursement for medicine and services provided.
11. Fulfill all financial obligations to Orsini in a timely manner.
12. Notify Orsini of:
 - a. Equipment failure, damage or need of additional supplies.
 - b. Any change to prescribed therapy, including change of prescriber.
 - c. Any change in or loss of insurance coverage.

- d. Any change of address or telephone number, whether permanent or temporary.
- e. Any change(s) in condition that may impact the service/care provided by Orsini or lead to discontinuation of the prescribed specialty medicine.

13. Demonstrate consideration and respect for Orsini personnel when communicating with staff members.

Additional Rights and Responsibilities for Patients in Patient Management Programs

- Understand the philosophy and characteristics of the patient management program.
- Have PHI shared with the patient management program only in accordance with state and federal law.
- Know the identity of the program's staff members, including the manager or director of the program, and be able to speak with a staff member's supervisor if requested.
- Speak to a health professional.
- Receive information about the patient management program.
- Receive administrative information regarding changes in or termination of the patient management program.
- Decline participation, revoke consent, or withdraw from the program at any time.
- Submit any forms that are necessary to participate in the program to the extent required by law.
- Give accurate clinical and contact information and notify the patient management program of changes in this information.
- Notify the treating healthcare provider of participation in the patient management program.



Rights and Protections for Medicare Patients

No matter how you get your Medicare, you have certain rights and protections designed to:

- Protect you when you get health care.
- Make sure you get the health care services that the law says you can get.
- Protect you against unethical practices.
- Protect your privacy.

You have the right to:

- Be treated with dignity and respect at all times.
- Be protected from discrimination.
 - Discrimination is against the law. Every company or agency that works with Medicare must obey the law, and can't treat you differently because of your race, color, national origin, disability, age, or sex (or gender identity) information.
- Have your personal and health information kept private.
 - If you have Original Medicare, see the "Notice of Privacy Practices for Original Medicare." You can view this notice in the "Medicare & You" handbook. Visit [Medicare.gov/publications](https://www.medicare.gov/publications) to view the handbook.
 - If you have a Medicare Advantage Plan (such as an HMO or PPO), other Medicare health plan, or a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan, read your plan materials.
- Get information in a way you understand from Medicare, health care providers, and contractors.
- Get clear and simple information about Medicare to help you make health care decisions, including:
 - What's covered.
 - What Medicare pays.
 - How much you have to pay.
 - What to do if you want to file a complaint or an appeal.
- Have your questions about Medicare answered.
 - Visit [Medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov).
 - Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). Teletype (TTY) users can call 1-877-486-2048.

- Call your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP). To get the most up-to-date SHIP phone numbers, visit shiptacenter.org, or call 1-800-MEDICARE.
 - Call your plan if you have a Medicare Advantage Plan, other Medicare health plan, or a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan.
- Have access to doctors, specialists, and hospitals.
 - Learn about your treatment choices in clear language that you can understand and participate in treatment decisions.
 - Participate fully in all your health care decisions. If you can't fully participate, ask a family member, friend, or someone you trust to help you decide about what treatment is right for you.
 - Get health care services in a language you understand and in a culturally sensitive way. For more information about getting health care services in languages other than English, visit [hhs.gov/ocr](https://www.hhs.gov/ocr). You can also get the phone number for your state's Office for Civil Rights by visiting [Medicare.gov/contacts](https://www.Medicare.gov/contacts).
 - Get emergency care when and where you need it.
 - If your health is in danger because you have a bad injury, sudden illness, or an illness that quickly gets much worse, CALL 9-1-1. You can get emergency care anywhere in the U.S.
 - To learn about emergency care in Original Medicare, visit [Medicare.gov](https://www.Medicare.gov), or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.
 - If you have a Medicare Advantage Plan or other Medicare health plan, your plan materials describe how to get emergency care. You don't need to get permission from your primary care doctor (the doctor you see first for health problems) before you get emergency care.
 - If you're admitted to the hospital, you, a family member, or your primary care doctor should contact your plan as soon as possible. If you get emergency care, you'll have to pay your regular share of the cost (copayment). Then, your plan will pay its share. If your plan doesn't pay its share for your emergency care, you have the right to appeal.
 - Get a decision about health care payment, coverage of services, or prescription drug coverage. When you request coverage for items or services, or a claim is filed for items or services you got, you'll get a notice from Medicare or be notified by your Medicare Advantage Plan, other Medicare health plan, or Medicare Prescription Drug Plan, letting you know what it will

and won't cover. If you disagree with this decision, you have the right to file an appeal.

- Request a review (appeal) of certain decisions about health care payment, coverage of services, or prescription drug coverage. If you disagree with a decision about your claims or services, you have the right to appeal.
- For more information on appeals:
 - Visit [Medicare.gov/appeals](https://www.medicare.gov/appeals).
 - Visit [Medicare.gov/publications](https://www.medicare.gov/publications) to view or print the booklet "Medicare Appeals," or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) to find out if a copy can be mailed to you. TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.
 - If you have a Medicare Advantage Plan, other Medicare health plan, or a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan, read your plan materials.
 - Call the SHIP in your state. To get the most up-to-date SHIP phone numbers, visit [shiptacenter.org](https://www.shiptacenter.org), or call 1-800-MEDICARE.
- File complaints (sometimes called "grievances"), including complaints about the quality of your care.
 - You can file a complaint about services you received, other concerns or problems you have in getting health care, or the quality of the health care you received.
 - If you're concerned about the quality of the care you received, you have the right to file a complaint.
 - If you have Original Medicare, call your Beneficiary and Family Centered Care Quality Improvement Organization (BFCC-QIO). Visit [Medicare.gov/contacts](https://www.medicare.gov/contacts) or call 1-800-MEDICARE to get your BFCC-QIO's phone number.
 - If you have a Medicare Advantage Plan (such as an HMO or PPO), Medicare drug plan, or other Medicare health plan, call the BFCC-QIO, your plan, or both.

If you have End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) and have a complaint about your care, call the ESRD Network for your state. ESRD is permanent kidney failure that requires a regular course of dialysis or a kidney transplant. To get this phone number, visit [Medicare.gov/contacts](https://www.medicare.gov/contacts), or call 1-800-MEDICARE.

Complaint Procedure

Orsini Specialty Pharmacy is committed to quality customer service. If you have concerns or complaints, you are encouraged to contact us to share them. Please direct them to the Orsini Compliance Officer at:

- a. **Email:** patientcare@orsinihc.com
- b. **Address:** 1107 Nicholas Blvd, Elk Grove Village, IL 60007
- c. **Phone:** 1-800-410-8575
- d. **Fax:** 1-847-879-9551

If you call us with a complaint, we'll respond to you as soon as possible. If we are unable to respond to you at that time, we'll respond to you by telephone within 5 days. If you write, fax or email us a complaint, we will respond as soon as possible within 14 days.

If Orsini is unable to address your concern to your satisfaction, you may contact any of our accrediting organizations:

1. ACHC (Accreditation Commission for Health Care) at (855) 937-2242; <https://www.achc.org/complaint-policy-process.html>.
2. The Joint Commission at https://www.jointcommission.org/report_a_complaint.aspx; fax: 630-792-5636; Mail: Office of Quality and Patient Safety, The Joint Commission, One Renaissance Boulevard, Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181.
3. URAC (Utilization Review Accreditation Commission) at 1-202-216-9010; <https://www.urac.org/>.
4. NABP at 1-847-391-4406; <https://nabp.pharmacy>.

With your input, we can continue to improve the customer service we provide.



Home Safety

Keep Germs from Spreading

Wear a mask over your nose and mouth when needed to reduce the risk of contagious diseases. Check with your doctor about keeping up to date on vaccinations.

Hand Washing with Soap and Water—Best Practices

1. Wet your hands and wrists with warm water.
2. Use soap. Work up a good lather and rub well for 15 seconds or longer.
3. Rinse your hands well.
4. Dry your hands well.
5. Use a clean paper towel to turn off the water. Throw the paper towel away.

Cleaning Your Hands with Hand Sanitizers (Waterless Hand Cleaners)—Best Practices

For gel product use one application. For foam product use a golf ball size amount.

1. Apply product to the palm of your hand.
2. Rub your hands together. Cover all sides of your hands and fingers until dry.

Safe Medicine Use

- If children are in the home, store medicines and poisons in childproof containers and out of reach.
- All medicines should be labeled clearly and kept in the containers they came in.
- Do not give or take medicines that were prescribed for other people.

- When taking or giving medicine, read the label and measure doses carefully. Know the possible side effects of the medicines you are taking.
- Throw away outdated medicine by following the What to Do with Your Unused Medicines section in this handbook.

Safe Use of Items That Help You Walk

When using items to help you get around, such as canes, walkers, wheelchairs or crutches, use extra care to make sure you don't slip and fall.

- Do not use walkers, canes or crutches where the ground is uneven, slippery or wet.
- Always lock your wheelchair or seated walker before you stand up or sit down.
- Always wear shoes when using a walker, a cane or crutches.

Prevent Slips and Falls in Your Home

Slips 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 so you have a clear walkway.
- Install safe handrails on all stairs, showers, bathtubs and toilets.
- Keep stairs clear of objects and well lit.
- Place rubber mats or grids in showers and bathtubs.
- 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.
- Install good lighting.
- Don't use throw rugs.

Get Help Lifting Heavy Items

If it's 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 prior to lifting the load.
- Use your leg strength to lift the load.
- Keep your back as straight as possible while you lift and carry the load.
- Avoid twisting your body when carrying the load.

Prevent Electrical Accidents

Watch for early warning signs: overheating, a burning smell or 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.
- Check cords for damage before use.
- Don't run cords under rugs, through doorways or near heaters.
- Choose the correct extension cord for larger appliances.
- If you have a broken plug, outlet or wire, don't use it. Get a new one or get it fixed right away.
- Don't overload outlets with too many plugs.

Prevent Gas Accidents

If you smell gas:

- Open windows and doors.
- Turn off gas appliances.
- Don't use matches or turn on electrical switches.
- Don't use your telephone inside - dialing may create electrical sparks.
- Don't light candles.
- Call the gas company from outside your home right away.
- If your gas company offers free yearly checkups, call and schedule one.



Prevent Fire and Practice Your Escape Plan

Pre-plan and practice your fire escape. Look for at least 2 ways out of your home. If your fire exit is through a window, make sure it opens easily. If you're in an apartment, know where the exit stairs are located. Don't 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:

- Put in smoke detectors. They're your best early warning. Test often and change the batteries every year.
- If you use oxygen at home, place "No Smoking—Oxygen in Use" signs in plain view. Don't use any type of heater, candles or fireplaces in your home.
- Have your furnace and pipes checked regularly. If nearby walls or ceilings feel hot, add insulation.
- Keep a fire extinguisher in your home and know how to use it.
- Don't toss a match into a wastebasket until you wet it with water first.
- Have your chimney and fireplace checked often. Look for and fix cracks and loose mortar.
- Keep paper, wood and rugs away from a fireplace area where sparks could hit them.
- Carefully follow all instructions when using space heaters.
- Follow instructions when using a heating pad to avoid serious burns.

If you have a fire or suspect fire:

1. Escape is your top priority – use your fire escape plan right away.
2. Get help on the way – with no delay. CALL 9-1-1.
3. If your fire escape is blocked by fire, close the door and seal the cracks to hold back smoke. Signal for help from the window. Find other ways to let help know where you are.



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