

# 5-minute solutions

A safety training talk used for successful injury prevention



## Home health care: Slips and falls

### Introduction:

Slips, trips and falls are the second leading cause of injury for home health care workers. Only sprains or strain-type injuries rank higher. Slips, trips or falls can happen inside or outside.

Be sure to consider your work activities as we talk. Improvement will come through awareness and application.

### Hazards inside the home

- Uneven or slippery floors.
- Wrinkled or worn carpet and curling vinyl.
- Clutter in rooms, hallways and on stairs.
- Lack of handrails on stairs.
- Electrical cords that cross walking areas.
- Open drawers.

### Safe work practices:

- Keep your shoes on while you work, if allowed in the client's home.
- Check the floor surface before walking on it. Is it wet, uneven or tattered?
- Make sure throw rugs don't slide when walking on them.
- Watch out for clutter. Suggest the items be stored properly. Tuck electrical cords out of the way and keep drawers closed.
- Always use handrails when walking up and down stairs.

- Carry loads with both hands to keep your balance and look where you're going.

### Hazards outside the home

- Slippery surfaces such as sidewalks, steps and wooden ramps covered with water, ice, snow, leaves or moss.
- Uneven or damaged sidewalks and driveways.
- Debris or items left on walk ways.
- Poor lighting.

### Safe work practices:

- Wear footwear that has a good tread. Loose sand, oil and anti-freeze can be very slippery, not unlike snow and ice.
- Visually scope out the walking surfaces before stepping to identify hazards.
- Move cautiously when exiting your vehicle and walking around the fenders.
- Be especially careful when walking on uneven, wet or icy surfaces.
- Use handrails.
- Use a flashlight.
- Don't rush.
- Notify your client representative and supervisor of hazardous conditions.