



Fire Prevention Strategies

Aging adults are twice as likely to die in fires as the general population. To help change that statistic, NCBAM makes available eight evidence-based fire prevention strategies that were developed by the National Fire Protection Association specifically for aging adults.

1. If you smoke, smoke outside.

- Use deep, sturdy ashtrays.
- Wet cigarette butts and ashes before throwing them out or bury them in sand.
- Never smoke in bed.

2. Give space heaters space.

- Keep them at least three feet away from anything that can burn – including you.
- Shut off and unplug heaters when you leave your home or go to bed.

3. Be kitchen wise.

- Wear tight-fitting clothing or short sleeves when cooking.
- Use oven mitts to handle hot pans.
- Never leave cooking unattended.
- If a pan of food catches fire, slide a lid over it and turn off the burner.
- Don't cook if you are drowsy from alcohol or medication.

4. Stop, drop, and roll.

- If your clothes catch on fire: stop (don't run), drop gently to the ground, and cover your face with your hands.
- Roll over and over or back and forth to put out the fire.
- Use cool water for 3 to 5 minutes to cool the burn.
- Get medical help right away.

5. Smoke alarms save lives.

- Have smoke alarms installed outside each sleeping area, on every level of your home, and in each bedroom.
- Make sure alarms are interconnected: when one sounds they all sound. Have someone test your smoke alarms once a month by pushing the test button.

6. Plan and practice your escape from fire.

- If possible, know two ways out of every room in your home and two ways out of the home.
- Make sure windows and doors open easily. In a fire, get out and stay out.

7. Know your local emergency number.

- It may be 9-1-1 or the fire department's phone number.
- Once you have escaped a fire, call the fire department from a neighbor's phone or a cell phone.

8. Plan your escape around your abilities.

- Have a telephone in your bedroom and post the local emergency number nearby in case you are trapped by smoke or fire.

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