

## **A Happy Home Is a Safe Home: An Overview of Home Modifications**

**Satellite Conference and Live Webcast  
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## **Faculty**

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## **Environmental Modifications**

- Anything that has been added to an environment to assist in the participation of activities of daily living

## **Who Could Use Environmental Adaptations?**

- Anyone!
- Home adaptations meet the needs of individuals with illnesses, injuries, and disabilities as well as people who are healthy and wish to grow older safely in their homes

## **Considerations**

- Who will be living in my home?
- How do I use each space in my home?
- What is my budget?

## **Modification Expenses**

- Free to low cost
- Midrange expenses
- Significant investments

### **Free / Low Cost Home Modifications**

- De-clutter
- Rearrange furniture
  - Consider placing chairs and sofas with their backs to the windows to reduce glare from the sun
- Remove throw rugs and worn carpet to prevent falls

### **Free / Low Cost Home Modifications**

- Watch for small pets
  - Add bells to pet collars for an auditory alert of their presence
- Add high contrast visual markers to stairs, grab bars, door frames, etc.

### **Free / Low Cost Home Modifications**

- Create a color contrast between doors and door frames and furniture and floor to increase visibility and assist with navigation within the home

### **Free / Low Cost Home Modifications**

- Organize your belongings into predictable groups and store supplies near the activity for which they are used
- Always provide adequate lighting
- Use a cart with wheels to move items from room to room

### **Low Cost Adaptive Equipment**

- Forks and spoons with large diameter handles
  - \$10-\$15
- Rocker knives
  - \$15-\$25
- Scoop dishes
  - \$10-\$25

### **Low Cost Adaptive Equipment**

- Hip kits (\$25-\$40)
  - Generally provided after hip surgery
  - Also very useful for people with limited flexibility
  - Long handled sponge (\$8-\$10)
  - Sock aids (\$15-\$20)
  - Reachers (\$15-\$20)

### **Mid-range Home Modifications**

- Install open shelving under cabinets to provide additional reachable storage
- Replace existing knob handles with loop handles
- Replace faucet knobs that turn with levels

### **Mid-range Home Modifications**

- Removing cabinets and opening a knee space under sinks provides better access for a seated user

### **Mid-range Home Modifications**

- Incorporate fall prevention mats to help prevent falls when transferring from sitting to standing
  - \$115
- Use lift chairs / recliners to assist in transferring from sit to stand
  - \$1,000-\$1,600

### **Mid-range Home Modifications**

- Add motion sensor lights to the inside and outside of the home

### **Significant Investments in Home Modifications**

- The price for bathroom renovations begins at approximately \$5,000
  - Tub removal and installation of walk-in shower
  - Installation of grab bars

### **Significant Investments in Home Modifications**

- Widen existing doorways to accommodate a wheelchair or scooter
- Expand bathroom to allow for 5 x 5 floor clearance for a toilet

### **Significant Investments in Home Modifications**

- **Stair Lifts**
  - \$1,500
- **Outdoor Ramps**
  - Prices vary on several factors
    - Length
    - Portable vs. fixed
    - Materials

### **Aging in Place**

- **Aging in place allows people to remain in their homes for as long as possible**
  - Consider your future needs and the future needs of your family members when purchasing or building / remodeling a home

### **Aging in Place**

- Making gradual modifications to your present home help prevent injuries and promote living as independently and as functionally as possible
- Consult an occupational therapist for a home assessment if your living environment needs modifications