



Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

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First in a series of five.

State to promote safety during National Public Health Week, April 4–10

Theme is Safety is No Accident!

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA — The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services is placing special emphasis on safety during National Public Health Week, April 4–10. This year's theme is *Safety is No Accident*. Unintentional injuries — such as motor vehicle crashes, traumatic brain injury and falls — rank among the 10 leading causes of hospitalizations in Alaska.

A different aspect of injury prevention is highlighted each day throughout the week.

For Monday, April 4, our focus is on safety in the home.

Falls are a major cause of injuries. Seventy-one percent occur in the home. Falls are the No. 1 reason for injury hospitalization for children under age 14 and adults 35 and older. For seniors over age 75, falls are the No.1 cause of fatal injuries, as falls often result in head trauma, hip fractures, and hospitalization.

To help prevent falls in the home:

- Keep stairways clean of clutter and well lit. Have a secure hand rail.
- Keep vinyl floors dry and loose rugs secured with double sided tape.
- Have a lamp close to the bed, or a nightlight on in the bedroom and bathroom.
- Use a non-skid bath mat or bathtub decals. Have a secure hand rail around the tub.
- Keep the things you need most often on lower, easy-to-reach shelves.
- Wear ice grippers or use a walker when walking outside.

For more information on keeping your home safe for seniors, contact Access Alaska:
<http://www.accessalaska.org/>.

For more safety ideas, go to our state injury prevention website:
http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/injury_prevention/.

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