

How to prevent slips, trips and falls.

A Helpful Guide to Bathroom Safety

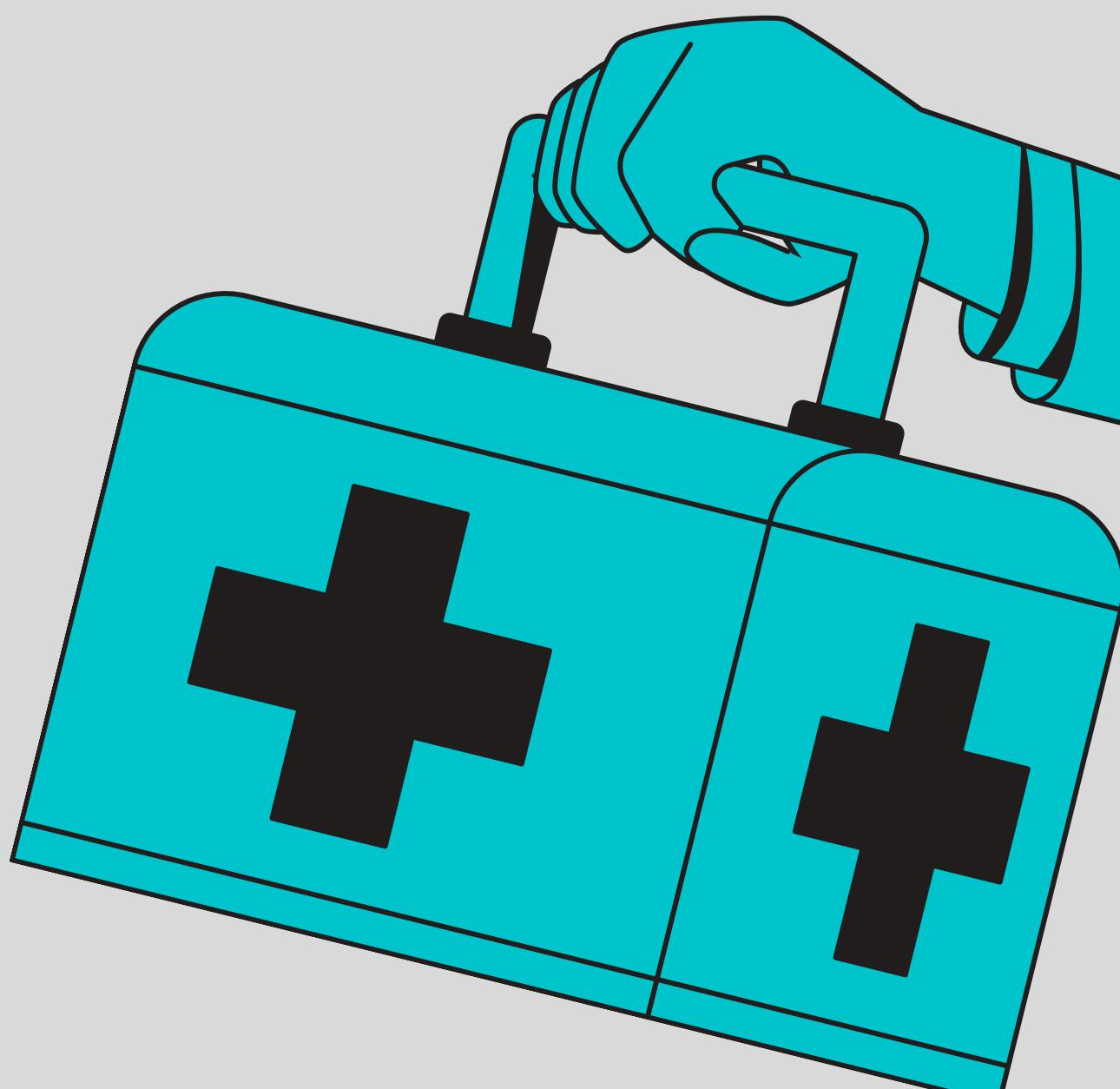
Everyone needs to be careful when it comes to safety in the bathroom. Through awareness and education, you can significantly reduce the likelihood of injury.

Facts about Falls:

- The bathroom is one of the most likely places in a home to suffer a slip or fall, which can result in broken bones, scrapes, bruises, or, in 20% of cases, even death
- Falls account for approximately 60% of all injury-related emergency department visits and over 50% of injury-related deaths annually
- Up to 80% of falls in the home occur in the bathroom. These fall-related injuries can range from minor scrapes and bruises to broken bones, head injury and spinal cord injury

Major Risks:

- Most falls occur while transferring in and out of the tub or shower or while using the toilet
- Individuals experiencing balance or mobility issues can fall when they are using sink tops, shower bars, hampers or other unstable objects to support themselves when in the bathroom
- Slick tile floors and small bathroom rugs can be a tripping hazard and cause a fall

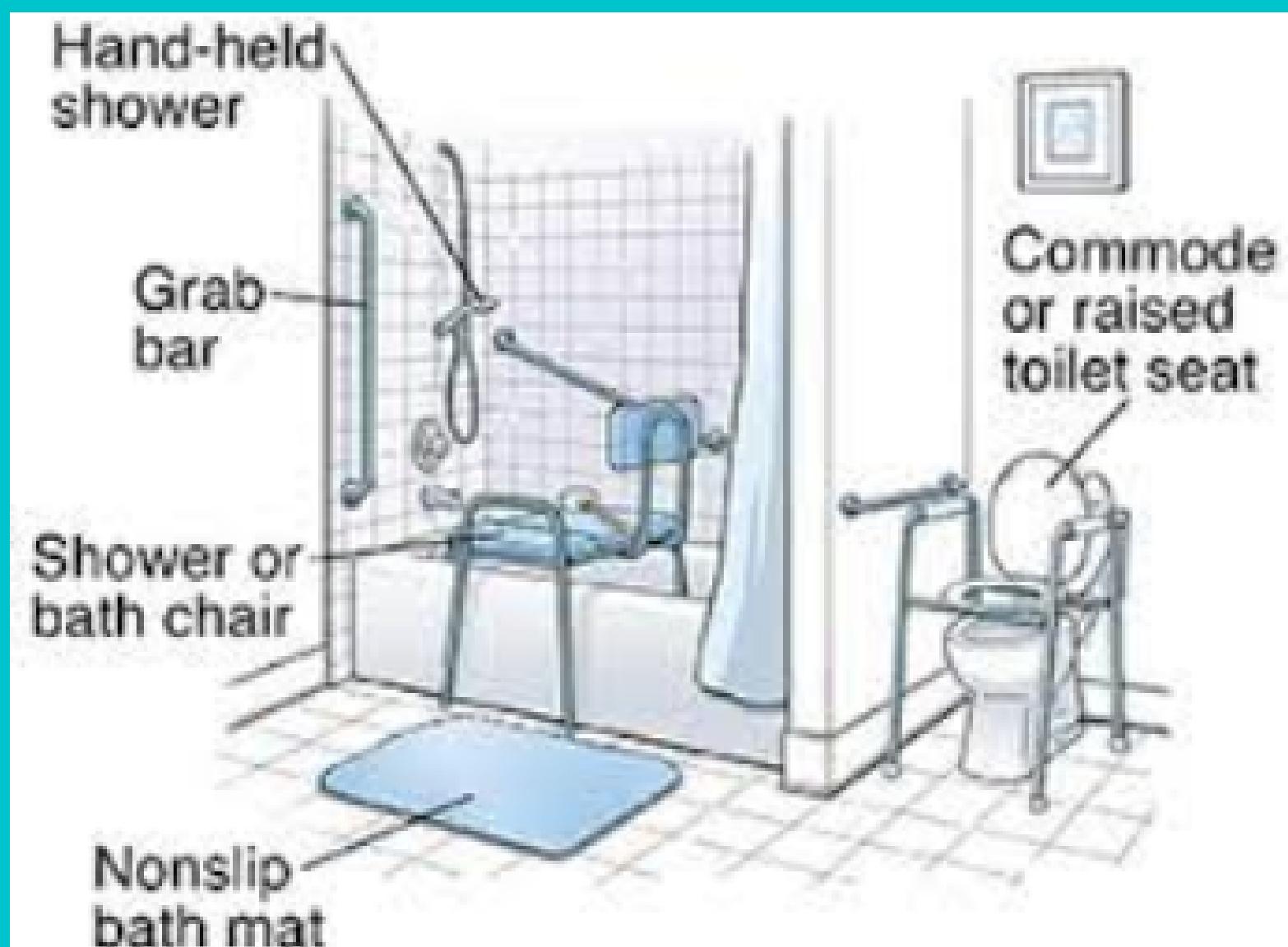


Fall Prevention in the Bathroom:

- Grab bars
- Raised toilet seat
- Motion sensor lights
- Keep room free of clutter

Preventing Slips in the Shower:

- Nonslip mats
- Shower chair
- Handheld shower head
- Keep shelves at eye level



Other Useful Modifications:

- Bath step
- Walk-in shower



Other Safety Tips:

- Regular cleaning
- Having assistance from caregiver/family member
- Avoid unnecessary water accumulation
- Use bathing aids
 - Long-handled sponges/loofahs
 - Foot scrubber



When to Call the Doctor:

If you are not sure what changes you need to make in your bathroom, ask your health care provider for a referral to an occupational therapist. The occupational therapist can visit your bathroom and make safety recommendations. Home health care can reduce the risk of bathroom falls by helping you find ways to improve the safety features of the home, monitoring seniors while they use the bathroom and assisting with personal care.

References

- 10 tips for preventing bathroom injuries. Complete Care. (2020, January 14). Retrieved March 16, 2022, from <https://www.completecare.ca/blog/safety/bathroom-safety-tips-seniors/>
- Safety for seniors: Preventing falls in the bathroom. Safety for seniors: Preventing falls in the bathroom :: Belvedere Health Services. (n.d.). Retrieved March 16, 2022, from <https://belvederehealthservices.com/belvedere-home-care/blog/safety-seniors-preventing-falls-bathroom>
- U.S. National Library of Medicine. (n.d.). Bathroom safety for adults: Medlineplus Medical Encyclopedia. MedlinePlus. Retrieved March 16, 2022, from <https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000021.htm>
- Vive Health. (n.d.). How to improve bathroom safety. Vive Health. Retrieved March 16, 2022, from <https://www.vivehealth.com/blogs/resources/bathroom-safety-modifications>