



**Connecticut
Caring
Companions**

The Complete HOME SAFETY GUIDE for Senior Citizens

Practical Safety Tips for Aging in Place

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Owned and Operated by Registered Nurses · CT Registered
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Introduction

Home is where we feel most comfortable, most independent, and most ourselves. For seniors who wish to age in place, maintaining a safe home environment is essential to preserving independence, preventing injuries, and enjoying peace of mind. This comprehensive guide is designed to help you, your family, and your caregivers create a safer living space that supports well-being and reduces the risk of preventable accidents.



Why Home Safety Matters

Every year, millions of older adults experience falls, burns, medication errors, and other home-related injuries. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), one in four Americans aged 65 and older falls each year, and falls are the leading cause of both fatal and nonfatal injuries among seniors. Many of these incidents are preventable with simple modifications and awareness.

Common Causes of Home Injuries

Understanding the most frequent hazards is the first step toward prevention:

- Falls – Caused by tripping hazards, poor lighting, slippery surfaces, unstable furniture, and lack of grab bars
- Burns – From cooking accidents, scalding water, or heating devices
- Medication Errors – Taking the wrong dose, missing doses, or mixing incompatible medications
- Fire Hazards – From unattended cooking, electrical issues, or faulty smoke detectors

- Carbon Monoxide Poisoning – From heating systems, generators, or gas appliances without proper ventilation

The Importance of Proactive Prevention

Waiting until an accident happens is too late. Small changes today can prevent serious injuries tomorrow. This guide provides room-by-room checklists, practical strategies, and professional recommendations to help you create a safer environment. Whether you live independently or with assistance, these tips will empower you to take control of your safety.

How Connecticut Caring Companions Supports Safe Aging in Place

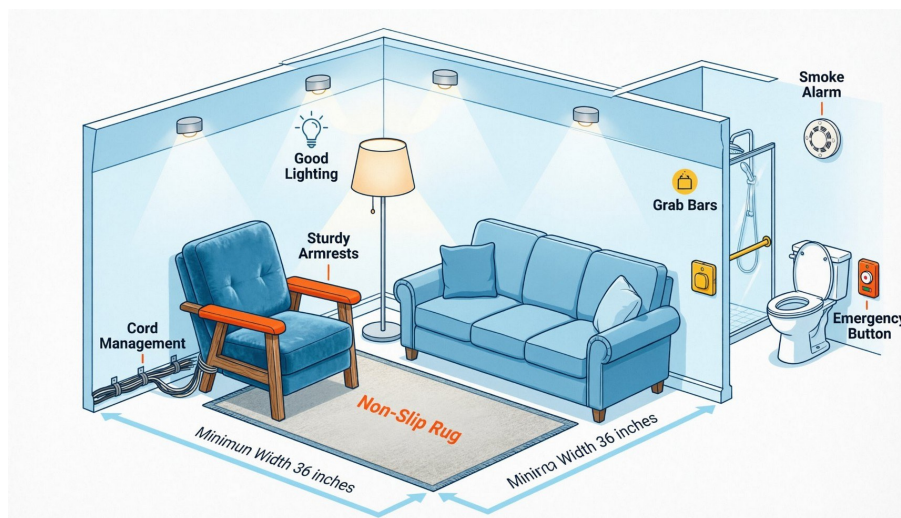
At Connecticut Caring Companions, we understand that safety is about more than just physical modifications—it's about having someone present who cares. Our non-medical companion care services provide seniors with attentive support, helping with daily activities, monitoring for potential hazards, and offering peace of mind to families. From meal preparation to light housekeeping and transportation, our compassionate caregivers are trained to recognize safety concerns and help maintain a secure home environment.

Room-by-Room Home Safety Checklist

Creating a safe home starts with examining each space where you spend time. Use this checklist to identify and address potential hazards throughout your home.

Living Room & Common Areas

The living room is a gathering place for relaxation and socializing, but it can also harbor hidden dangers. Clear pathways, stable furniture, and proper lighting are essential.



Trip Hazards

- ☐ Remove or secure all loose rugs and floor mats. Use non-slip rug pads or double-sided tape to prevent sliding.
- ☐ Eliminate clutter from walkways, including magazines, shoes, and decorative items.
- ☐ Ensure that floor transitions between rooms are smooth and clearly visible.
- ☐ Keep pet toys, food bowls, and beds away from high-traffic areas.

Lighting Improvements

- ☐ Install bright overhead lighting and add lamps in dim corners.
- ☐ Use LED bulbs with higher lumens for better visibility without glare.
- ☐ Place light switches at room entrances so you never enter a dark space.
- ☐ Consider motion-activated lights for convenience and safety during nighttime movement.

Furniture Stability

- ☐ Choose sturdy chairs with armrests for easier sitting and standing.
- ☐ Avoid furniture on wheels or casters that can move unexpectedly.
- ☐ Arrange furniture to create clear, wide pathways (at least 36 inches) for walking and mobility aids.
- ☐ Anchor tall bookshelves and cabinets to the wall to prevent tipping.

Cord and Cable Management

- ☐ Bundle and secure electrical cords along baseboards using cord covers or clips.

- ☐ Never run cords under rugs where they can create tripping hazards or overheat.
- ☐ Use power strips with surge protection and avoid overloading outlets.

Kitchen Safety - Critical Fall Prevention Focus

The kitchen is one of the most active—and potentially hazardous—areas in any home. Between cooking, cleaning, and frequent movement, seniors face multiple risks. Proper safety measures in the kitchen can dramatically reduce the chance of falls, burns, and other injuries.



Absorbent Flooring & Leak Protection (HIGH PRIORITY)

One of the most common and dangerous kitchen hazards for seniors is unnoticed water leakage. Small leaks often occur without warning and may go undetected until a slip and fall happens.

High-risk areas include:

- In front of the refrigerator (defrost cycles, ice makers, condensation)
- Near the dishwasher (hose wear, seal failure, overflow)
- Around the sink (drips, splashing, loose fittings)
- Any area with water supply lines or drainage

Safety Recommendations:

- ☐ Place high-quality absorbent, non-slip rugs or mats in all leak-prone areas
- ☐ Ensure rugs have rubber or non-skid backing to prevent sliding
- ☐ Check that rug edges are flat with no curling or lifting
- ☐ Choose mats with adequate absorption capacity for potential water exposure
- ☐ Avoid thin decorative rugs that slide when wet
- ☐ Inspect rugs daily and replace immediately if saturated or worn

- ☐ Never allow water to remain unnoticed on hard floors—wipe up spills immediately

Why This Matters

Leakage is often random, silent, and invisible, especially overnight or when appliances cycle automatically. Seniors may step onto a wet surface before realizing it is unsafe, dramatically increasing the risk of serious injury.

Caregiver Tip

As part of routine home safety checks, caregivers should visually and physically inspect all kitchen floor areas near water sources at the start of each visit.

Additional Kitchen Safety Reinforcements

- ☐ Keep walkways clear of clutter, step stools, and electrical cords
- ☐ Ensure strong overhead lighting and install under-cabinet lights for counter work areas
- ☐ Store frequently used items at waist height to avoid reaching or bending
- ☐ Use appliances with automatic shutoff features when possible (kettles, coffee makers, stoves)
- ☐ Turn pot handles inward while cooking to prevent accidental spills
- ☐ Wear close-fitting sleeves when cooking to avoid catching fire on burners
- ☐ Keep a fire extinguisher within easy reach and ensure it is regularly inspected

Bathroom Safety (HIGH-RISK AREA)

Bathrooms present some of the highest fall risks in the home due to wet surfaces, limited space, and frequent transfers (such as getting in and out of the tub). Proper modifications can greatly enhance safety.



Grab Bars and Support

- ☐ Install grab bars near the toilet, inside the shower or tub, and outside the tub entrance
- ☐ Ensure grab bars are professionally installed into wall studs (not just drywall) to support full body weight
- ☐ Avoid towel bars as support—they are not designed to bear weight and can break

Non-Slip Surfaces

- ☐ Place non-slip mats inside the shower and tub
- ☐ Use a rubber-backed bath mat outside the tub or shower to prevent slipping on wet floors
- ☐ Consider applying non-slip adhesive strips to the tub or shower floor for added traction

Toilet Safety

- ☐ Install a raised toilet seat if standing from a low position is difficult
- ☐ Add armrests or a toilet safety frame for additional support when sitting and rising

Water Temperature Control

- ☐ Set the water heater to 120°F (49°C) or lower to prevent scalding
- ☐ Install anti-scald devices on faucets and showerheads
- ☐ Test water temperature with your hand or elbow before entering the shower or bath

Additional Bathroom Considerations

- ☐ Keep a nightlight in the bathroom for safe nighttime access
- ☐ Store medications in clearly labeled containers in a well-lit, accessible location
- ☐ Ensure towels, toiletries, and other essentials are within easy reach
- ☐ Consider a walk-in shower or tub with a built-in seat for easier bathing

Bedroom Safety

The bedroom should be a safe haven for rest and recovery. Proper setup reduces the risk of falls during nighttime trips and ensures ease of movement throughout the day.

Bed Height and Accessibility

- ☐ Ensure the bed is at a comfortable height—feet should touch the floor when sitting on the edge
- ☐ Consider bed risers to raise the bed or a lower frame to bring it down, depending on need
- ☐ Install grab bars or bed rails if assistance is needed getting in and out of bed

Night Lighting

- ☐ Place a lamp with an easy-to-reach switch on the nightstand
- ☐ Install nightlights along the path from the bedroom to the bathroom
- ☐ Consider motion-activated lighting that turns on automatically when you get out of bed

Clear Walk Paths

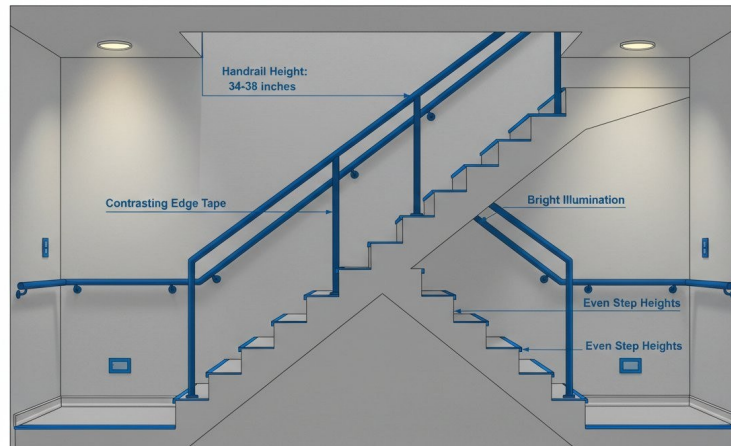
- ☐ Remove all clutter from the floor, including clothing, shoes, and boxes
- ☐ Arrange furniture to allow clear, wide pathways for safe movement
- ☐ Secure or remove loose rugs that can cause tripping

Emergency Access and Communication

- ☐ Keep a phone or medical alert device within easy reach of the bed
- ☐ Post emergency contact numbers in a visible location
- ☐ Ensure a flashlight is available in case of power outages

Stairways & Hallways

Stairs and hallways are high-traffic areas where falls are particularly dangerous. Proper lighting, handrails, and visibility are essential for safe navigation.



Handrails and Support

- ☐ Install sturdy handrails on both sides of all stairways
- ☐ Ensure handrails extend beyond the top and bottom steps for added stability
- ☐ Handrails should be securely fastened and at a comfortable height (typically 34-38 inches)

Step Visibility

- ☐ Mark the edge of each step with contrasting tape or paint to improve visibility
- ☐ Ensure all steps are the same height and depth to prevent missteps
- ☐ Repair any loose, broken, or uneven steps immediately

Lighting

- ☐ Install bright lighting at the top and bottom of all stairways
- ☐ Use light switches at both ends of the staircase and in hallways for convenience
- ☐ Consider motion-sensor lighting for automatic illumination

Clutter Removal

- ☐ Keep stairs and hallways completely clear of items such as shoes, bags, or storage boxes
- ☐ Never store items on stairs, even temporarily
- ☐ Secure or remove any rugs or runners that could slip or bunch up

Fall Prevention Strategies

Falls are the leading cause of injury among seniors, but many can be prevented with awareness and proactive measures. Beyond home modifications, personal habits and health management play a crucial role in maintaining balance and stability.



Proper Footwear

- Wear shoes with non-slip soles and good arch support, both indoors and outdoors
- Avoid walking in socks, stockings, or slippers with smooth bottoms
- Choose shoes that fit well and have low, wide heels
- Replace worn-out shoes regularly to maintain adequate traction

Assistive Devices (Canes, Walkers)

- Use a cane or walker if recommended by a healthcare provider
- Ensure assistive devices are properly fitted to your height
- Check walker or cane tips regularly for wear and replace as needed
- Consider physical therapy to learn proper use and improve balance

Vision and Hearing Considerations

- Have vision checked annually and update eyeglass prescriptions as needed
- Ensure adequate lighting in all areas to compensate for reduced vision

- Be aware that bifocals or multifocal lenses can affect depth perception on stairs
- Maintain hearing aids if prescribed—hearing helps with balance and spatial awareness

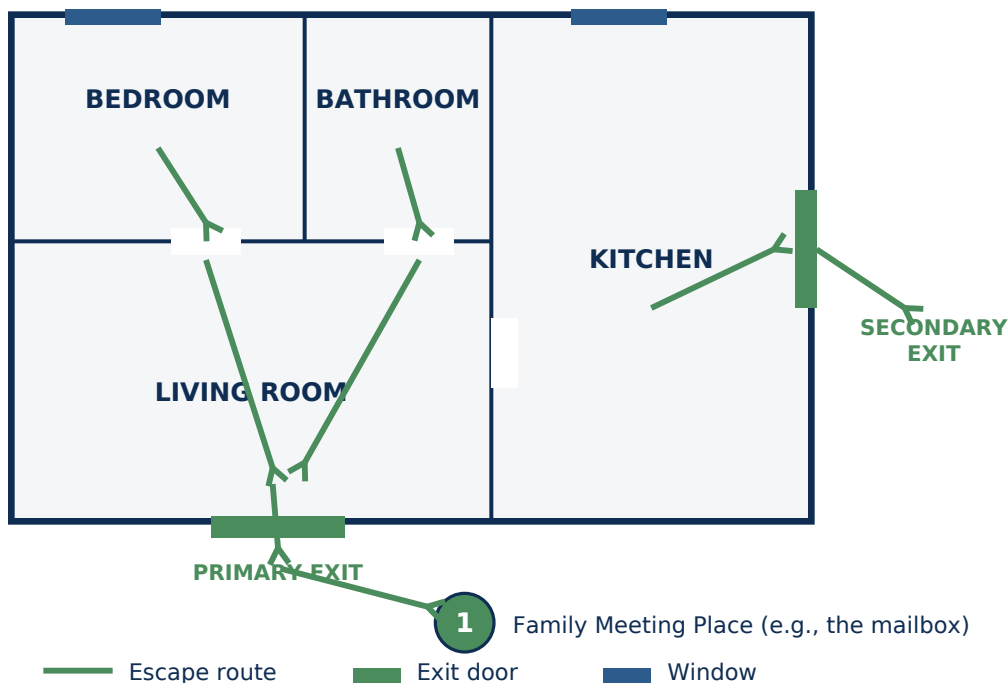
Daily Routines That Reduce Risk

- Stand up slowly from sitting or lying down to avoid dizziness
- Take your time when moving—rushing increases the chance of falling
- Engage in regular physical activity to maintain strength, flexibility, and balance (consult your doctor first)
- Review medications with your doctor—some can cause dizziness or drowsiness
- Stay hydrated and maintain good nutrition to prevent weakness and lightheadedness

Fire & Emergency Preparedness

Being prepared for emergencies can save lives. Seniors should have clear plans in place for fires, power outages, and severe weather—especially during Connecticut's cold winters.

SAMPLE HOME FIRE ESCAPE PLAN — KNOW TWO WAYS OUT OF EVERY ROOM



Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors

- ☐ Install smoke detectors on every level of the home, inside bedrooms, and outside sleeping areas
- ☐ Install carbon monoxide detectors near sleeping areas and on every level
- ☐ Test alarms monthly and replace batteries at least once a year
- ☐ Replace smoke and CO detectors every 10 years or according to manufacturer guidelines

Fire Escape Planning

- ☐ Identify at least two exits from every room
- ☐ Create a fire escape plan and practice it at least twice a year
- ☐ Designate a safe meeting place outside the home

- ☐ Keep a phone near the bed to call 911 if you cannot escape

Emergency Contact Lists

- ☐ Post emergency phone numbers in a visible location (refrigerator, near the phone)
- ☐ Include contacts for family members, neighbors, doctors, and local emergency services
- ☐ Program important numbers into cell phones and medical alert devices

Power Outage Readiness

- ☐ Keep flashlights and extra batteries in accessible locations
- ☐ Avoid using candles—use battery-powered LED lights instead
- ☐ Have a battery-powered or hand-crank radio to receive emergency updates
- ☐ Stock non-perishable food and bottled water for at least 3 days

Winter Safety (Important for Connecticut)

- ☐ Keep pathways and driveways clear of snow and ice
- ☐ Use salt or sand on walkways to prevent slipping
- ☐ Ensure heating systems are inspected and maintained annually
- ☐ Never use gas stoves or ovens for heating—this can cause carbon monoxide poisoning
- ☐ Have an alternative heating source or plan if power is lost during severe winter storms

Medication & Daily Living Safety

Managing medications properly is critical to health and safety. Errors in dosing, timing, or combining medications can lead to serious consequences. Seniors should take steps to organize medications and ensure they are taken correctly.



Medication Organization

- ☐ Use a weekly pill organizer with compartments for each day and time of day
- ☐ Keep a current list of all medications, including dosages and prescribing doctors
- ☐ Store medications in their original labeled containers when not using a pill organizer
- ☐ Set reminders or alarms to take medications at the correct times

Avoiding Confusion and Missed Doses

- ☐ Review all medications with your doctor or pharmacist regularly
- ☐ Discard expired or discontinued medications safely—many pharmacies offer take-back programs
- ☐ Never share prescription medications with others
- ☐ Ask about potential side effects and interactions when starting new medications

Safe Storage

- ☐ Store medications in a cool, dry place away from direct sunlight
- ☐ Keep medications out of reach of children and pets if they visit
- ☐ Avoid storing medications in the bathroom, where heat and humidity can degrade them

Hydration and Nutrition Reminders

- ☐ Drink water throughout the day—dehydration can cause dizziness and confusion
- ☐ Eat balanced meals to maintain energy and prevent weakness
- ☐ Set mealtime reminders if appetite or memory is a concern
- ☐ Prepare simple, nutritious snacks in advance to have on hand

Technology & Monitoring Tools (Non-Medical)

Modern technology can greatly enhance safety and independence for seniors. From medical alert systems to smart home devices, these tools provide peace of mind for both seniors and their families.



Medical Alert Systems

- Wearable alert buttons or pendants allow seniors to call for help in case of falls or emergencies
- Choose systems with 24/7 monitoring and GPS tracking for outdoor use
- Consider systems with fall detection that automatically alert emergency services

Smart Lighting

- Install motion-activated lights in hallways, bathrooms, and entryways
- Use smart bulbs that can be controlled by voice or smartphone for convenience
- Program lights to turn on automatically at dusk and turn off at sunrise

Fall-Detection Devices

- Wearable sensors can detect falls and automatically notify caregivers or emergency contacts

- Some devices include GPS tracking to locate seniors if they wander or become disoriented
- Look for devices with long battery life and waterproof features for shower safety

Emergency Call Buttons

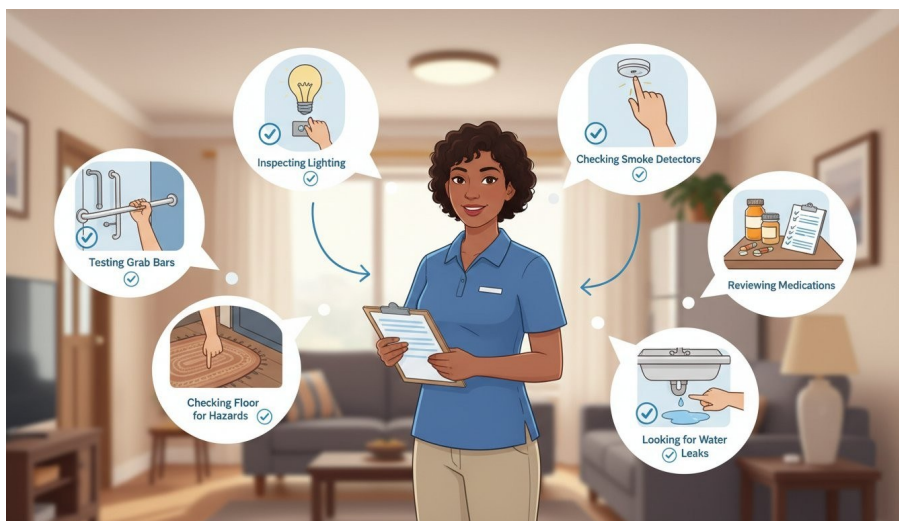
- Install emergency call buttons in key locations like the bedroom, bathroom, and main living area
- Connect buttons to a home monitoring system or directly to emergency contacts
- Ensure buttons are large, clearly marked, and easy to press in an emergency

Additional Helpful Technologies

- Video doorbells allow seniors to see who is at the door without opening it
- Smart thermostats help maintain comfortable temperatures and prevent overheating or excessive cold
- Medication reminder apps send alerts when it's time to take pills

Caregiver & Family Tips

Family members and caregivers play a vital role in maintaining a safe home environment. Regular check-ins and awareness of potential warning signs can help prevent accidents and ensure seniors remain safe and comfortable.



What Families Should Regularly Check

- ☐ Walk through the home and identify new tripping hazards, clutter, or safety concerns
- ☐ Test smoke detectors, carbon monoxide alarms, and emergency call systems
- ☐ Ensure medications are organized, up to date, and being taken as prescribed
- ☐ Check for expired food in the refrigerator and pantry
- ☐ Inspect grab bars, handrails, and assistive devices for wear or loosening
- ☐ Verify that lighting is adequate in all areas, especially pathways and stairs

Warning Signs of Declining Safety

Be alert for these signs that additional support may be needed:

- Unexplained bruises, cuts, or injuries that may indicate falls
- Difficulty walking, increased unsteadiness, or reluctance to move around the home
- Confusion about medications or skipped doses
- Neglected housekeeping, spoiled food, or piles of unopened mail
- Isolation, withdrawal, or reluctance to leave the house

- Weight loss, dehydration, or signs of poor nutrition

When Additional Support Is Needed

If you notice any of the above warning signs, it may be time to consider additional help. Options include:

- Non-medical companion care to assist with daily activities and provide safety monitoring
- Physical therapy to improve strength, balance, and mobility
- Home modifications such as installing ramps, widening doorways, or adding stairlifts
- Meal delivery services or assistance with meal preparation
- Regular check-ins from family, friends, or professional caregivers

Early intervention can make a significant difference in maintaining independence and preventing serious accidents. Don't wait until a crisis occurs—seek support when you first notice changes.

How Connecticut Caring Companions Helps

At Connecticut Caring Companions, we believe that every senior deserves to age with dignity, independence, and safety in the comfort of their own home. Our non-medical companion care services are designed to support seniors in their daily lives while providing families with peace of mind.



Non-Medical Companion Care

Our compassionate caregivers provide personalized support tailored to each senior's unique needs and preferences. Services include:

- Companionship and conversation to reduce loneliness and social isolation
- Assistance with daily activities such as meal preparation, light housekeeping, and laundry
- Transportation to appointments, errands, and social activities
- Medication reminders to help seniors stay on schedule
- Assistance with personal care routines and mobility support

Safety Monitoring

Our caregivers are trained to recognize potential safety hazards and take proactive steps to address them. During each visit, we:

- Inspect the home for trip hazards, water leaks, and other risks
- Ensure walkways, stairs, and common areas are clear and well-lit
- Monitor for signs of declining health, confusion, or mobility challenges

- Communicate any concerns to family members promptly

Peace of Mind for Families

We understand that family caregivers often live far away or have demanding responsibilities. Our services provide regular, reliable support so families can rest assured their loved ones are safe, comfortable, and well cared for. We maintain open communication and provide updates so you always know how your loved one is doing.

Emphasizing Non-Medical, Companion-Based Support

Connecticut Caring Companions focuses exclusively on non-medical companion care. We do not provide skilled nursing or medical treatments. Instead, we offer the human connection, daily assistance, and attentive presence that help seniors thrive at home. Our goal is to enhance quality of life, preserve independence, and create meaningful relationships built on trust and respect.

Take the First Step Toward a Safer Home

Creating a safe home environment is one of the most important steps you can take to support aging in place. Whether you're looking for guidance on home modifications, seeking companion care services, or simply want to discuss your family's unique needs, Connecticut Caring Companions is here to help.

Our experienced team is ready to provide personalized support tailored to your situation. We invite you to reach out for a free consultation to learn how we can make a difference in your life or the life of someone you love.

Contact Us Today

Phone: (860) 812-0332 · Email: care@ctcaringcompanions.com · Website: www.ctcaringcompanions.com

Hospital and skilled nursing facility discharge planners: call our direct discharge line at (860) 365-9625 to refer a patient — referrals are processed within hours.



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