

Environment and related assistive devices in toilet and bathroom

In order to ensure safety during toileting

The environment and the facilities should match the ability of the elder and appropriate assistive devices should be used

This will facilitate self care and enhance safety

A raised toilet seat can help the elder to stand up from toilet more easily

When installing a raised toilet seat

the brackets should be adjusted to fit the toilet well

and it must be installed securely before use

Various kinds of raised toilet seats are available commercially

Consult an occupational therapist before

making the decision to use such devices

Another assistive device is the toilet frame

They provide armrests on both sides that can be held by the elder when standing up or sitting down

Make sure there is adequate space beside the toilet

for placing the frame before purchase

It must be installed securely on the toilet before use

Install handrails beside the toilet so that the elder can hold

and maintain balance when standing up or sitting down on the toilet

"There are two kinds of handrails, fixed and foldable"

Choose according to the ability of the elder

and match with the living environment

The handrail should be installed with anchor bolts

by a qualified technician

For elders with physical weakness

a mobile commode on castors is more desirable

carers can push the elder seated on the mobile commode

to the toilet or bathroom

When using the mobile commode on castors be sure to remove obstacles

"e.g. armrests, footrests"

it should be placed close to the bed against the wall

The brakes must be locked

before helping the elder to transfer to the commode

For techniques in transferring the elder from bed to commode

Please refer to part 2 of this video

After he is properly seated

you can put the armrests and footrests back into positions
and release the brakes

Before pushing the commode

put the arms of the elder inside the armrests to avoid injury

There are various kinds of commercially available assistive devices
for usage in the toilet

"with different height, dimensions and design"

Bathing is an important part of personal hygiene

But if the floor of bathroom is wet

or if the elder has certain risky behaviours or habits

there is risk of fall in the bathroom

Please note the following common mistakes

For example

using a towel rail instead of a proper handrail for support in standing
up

The towel rail may get loosened easily and may come off when the elder
is holding it

"As a result, the elder would lose his balance"

Another problem is trip and fall when getting in and out of the bath tub

"If some elders like to sit on a stool when bathing, but the stool is too
low and"

it is difficult to get up

with a risk of falling backwards

The above situations can all cause injury

and affect the self care ability of the elder

To address the above problems

elders and carers can use the following methods and assistive devices
to enhance safety during bathing

Bathrooms are usually fitted with shower cubicles or bath tubs

For both types

the handrail is a useful assistive device

It can provide a reliable hold for support during transfer

and ensure safety when bathing

It should be installed properly according to the ability of the elder
and matched with the living environment

Handrails should be installed with anchor bolts

by a qualified technician

A non-slip mat can be used in the bath tub or shower cubicle

to prevent slip and fall during bathing

A bathboard can be used on the bath tub

It allows the elder with poor balance to sit down when bathing

It is also safe for the elder to get in

and out of the bath tub while sitting

and reduce the risk of slip and fall

Please note that the brackets of the bathboard should be adjusted

to fit on the bath tub securely before use

The length of bathboard should match with the width of the bath tub

Regular check is important to avoid loosening of bathboard

In the shower cubicles

some elders like to sit on a small stool to bathe

but the stool is too low for them to get up

and there is a risk of falling backward

So it is not suitable

It is better to use a shower chair in the shower cubicle

and enable elders with poor balance to

"sit down when bathing, to prevent slip and fall"

The height of the shower chair should fit the body build of the elder

Shower chairs do not require installation

but it is necessary to ensure it is placed securely

in the shower cubicle before use

Various kinds of bathboards and shower chairs are available commercially

Consult an occupational therapist before purchase to ensure correct application

All assistive devices should be checked and maintained regularly