

Safety Checklist for Seniors Living Alone with a Dog

One page for by the front door. Tick each line when you and the senior agree it is true.

About this checklist:

One page for an older Australian who spends the day on their own with a dog - and the family that worries. Keep it by the front door or laminated on the fridge. Read each line with the senior and tick it together. Review every season - cross out anything that no longer applies and write new names and new numbers in by hand as they change. The Lifeline Collars SOS collar is one extra layer of in-home protection that pairs with broader preparedness; this checklist is useful with or without it.

01 - Kitchen - hot surfaces, spills and

☐ Turn the kettle off at the wall before walking to the table - A short memory lapses most often on the second trip to the lounge. | ☐ Move the pet food bowl away from the stove and the back door - Excited dogs knock bowls into the burners and trip the senior reaching past. | ☐ Keep a folded towel on the counter within reach of the stove - Catching a small spill yourself beats crawling to the sink after a fall. | ☐ Store the step-stool out of sight, not beside the cupboards - A stool on the floor is an invitation to climb - most kitchen falls start there. | ☐ Put the morning medication on the bench the night before, once - Spoons, scissors and pill bottles all share the one surface the senior reaches for first. | ☐ Mark the front of the fridge with the GP number and 000 - A fridge in the dark is the last place you forget; visitors or paramedics could read it for you. | ☐ Set a phone reminder 5 minutes after the oven timer - The timer rings; the moment after, the senior steps into another room and forgets. |

02 - Bathroom - tiles, water and the

☐ Lay a non-slip mat inside the shower and one just outside it - Most bathroom falls are a wet foot on a dry tile - the second mat catches that. | ☐ Move the dog's water bowl out of the bathroom doorway - A short walk at night plus a wet floor is the classic slip pattern. | ☐ Put a nightlight on the hallway between bed and bathroom - Routes walked in the dark account for half of all after-dark "I've fallen" calls. | ☐ Keep a phone on the bathroom ledge before turning the shower on - A fall happens in the first minute; reaching back to the bedroom takes too long. | ☐ Switch a tall loofah-on-a-stick for a wall-mounted soap dish - Bending and reaching for soap while standing is the common bathroom-slip cue. | ☐ Test the grab rail by leaning on it once a month, lightly - Rails pulled loose from tile are the silent second fall on the same day. | ☐ Place the towel on the rail before turning the shower on - Cold, wet seniors slip on the reach for a towel, not on the standing. |

03 - Night-time routine - the bed, the

☐ Walk the dog once more in the yard at 9 pm, not 11 pm - A short, calm pre-bed loop prevents a wake-up at 2 am and a half-awake stumble to the back door. | ☐ Put the leash on a hook by the back door before bed - Reaching for the leash at half-past-two on a winter morning is when the senior steps back into the dark hall. | ☐ Charge the phone on the bedside table, volume up, ringer on - A phone on silent is the same as a phone in another room when help is needed. | ☐ Pick a "house slippers on before you stand" rule - always - Cold floors and bare feet are the small cause behind most night-time calls. | ☐ Wear the Lifeline Collar collar - even through the night - A dog fall or a senior fall both happen in seconds; the SOS is on the dog before you stand up. | ☐ Keep a glass of water on the bedside, not the kitchen - Walking to the kitchen at midnight means a slippery floor, the back door and the dog barking. | ☐ Set one

lamp on a timer for the first hour of sleep - The senior wakes in the half-dark and looks for shapes; the lamp keeps the route in front of them. | ☐ Write the date on a small note on the bedside, with the morning's GP slot - A day-of-the-week note cuts 60 seconds of confusion from every "what day is it". |

04 - Dog-care basics - food, walks | ☐ Feed the dog at the same two times every day, in the same spot - Predictable feeding calms the dog and removes the half-dozing reach for the bowl at 5 am. | ☐ Keep one spare lead and one spare collar in a drawer by the door - A broken lead at 7 am means a panicked, slow walk - which is where most falls start. | ☐ Refill the dog's water bowl in the morning, not at night - A dog that needs a drink at 3 am will nudge the senior out of bed for it. | ☐ Walk the lead hand, not wrist, on colder afternoons - A sudden pull on a thin wrist is the same lift force as a fall - 18 kg of dog at full tilt. | ☐ Keep the dog's ID tag on at all times; back-up phone on the collar - If the dog slips out the gate without you, the tag is the difference between a same-day call and a lost dog. | ☐ Write the vet's number on the fridge, beside the GP number - Two numbers on the same door, in the same handwriting, makes them easier to read in the dark. | ☐ Have a neighbour or pet-sitter who knows the dog's name - A vet visit that needs a 6 am drop-off will be the second call you make; the first catches the dog. | ☐ Bring a small towel and water on every walk, even short ones - Most senior-pet tiredness on a walk is dehydration, not age - and a tow-off is a quiet break. |

05 - Emergency contacts - by the phone | ☐ Put 000, the local police and the closest 24-hour ED on the first line - Three numbers on day one; the senior never has to look for the first one when something goes wrong. | ☐ Keep two family or friend contacts - mobile, work, after-hours - One person across a three-time-zone gap; the second is the person who picks up the same evening. | ☐ Pick one neighbour and agree on a daily wave or knock - A missed wave at 9 am is the cue for the neighbour to ring; the senior never has to ask for help. | ☐ Write the Lifeline Collars 24/7 desk number on the same fridge card - Press the button on the collar and the desk answers; the senior should see the number alongside the others. | ☐ Add a 4th line: the GP and the chemist for repeats - Medication running short is the small slip that becomes a 7-day emergency; keep the chemist with the others. | ☐ Record the dog's vet and the closest 24-hour animal hospital - A dog injury is the reason a senior hops the fence or walks alone at midnight - the vet number is the same plan. | ☐ Save all six numbers as labelled speed-dial favourites - One tap, no scrolling - the same group of contacts lives on the fridge, in the phone and in a written list. |

06 - Mobility and falls - rugs, stairs | ☐ Lift every loose rug or fix it with double-sided tape - A rug corner is the leading cause of the "I went down in the lounge" call; tape is a \$5 fix. | ☐ Keep one lamp on in every room the senior walks through - Half-lit hallways turn a half-trip into a fall; the light keeps the route even before the dog barks. | ☐ Add a second handrail on any staircase with five or more steps - Most stair falls are the single-rail version; two rails keep the climb the same in both hands. | ☐ Move the dog's bed so the senior can stand up next to it - Bending to pat a dog in an awkward corner is the cue for a half-fall on the way up. | ☐ Wear the Lifeline Collar collar - on every walk and in the yard - A dog fall or a senior fall both happen in seconds; the SOS is on the dog before you stand up. | ☐ Sit before you tend a low

cupboard, the oven or the dog's food - Most low-bench falls happen on the way back up; a kitchen stool next to the bench is a small readjustment. | ☐ Carry the phone in a pocket, not in a back trouser pocket - A phone in a back pocket is the wrong shape on a fall; a small bag at the hip is the same phone, kept safer. | ☐ Place a chair in every long hallway - a halfway point - A chair in the hall is the halfway break to lean on before the senior reaches the front door. |

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