

Safety in the Kitchen

The kitchen can become a dangerous place for people with memory problems. Sometimes people may forget simple skills or behaviours that used to be second nature. You may want to make some changes in your kitchen for safety reasons. However, it is important to make sure the person can continue to do modified tasks and participate in cooking for as long as possible.

Food preparation is a meaningful activity for many people, and can allow them to maintain their independence and dignity. Some signs that people may need extra help in the kitchen include having trouble remembering where ingredients are and how to put them together, leaving the stove on, and forgetting to turn off the kettle. These problems can end up causing frustration and also put everyone at greater risk of injury.

To help make your kitchen a place you can all enjoy safely, try these simple tips:

- **Put bright stickers on the “off” switch on the stove.** If this does not work, have a safety switch installed which can ensure that you know if the stove is on. If this does not work, you may want to consider the stove off limits and remove some fuses or choose to unplug the stove.
- **Use electric appliances** which have automatic shut-off buttons.
- **Buy a microwave oven for cooking.** This eliminates the possibility of a fire altogether and is easier to use than a larger stove.
- **Keep frozen foods in a separate location** from the fridge to make sure food that should be in one area stays there.
- **Place all the ingredients and utensils for a certain dish together,** such as coffee or oatmeal. This allows the making of simple dishes without having to go all through the kitchen.
- **Mark cupboards with labels,** such as “Cups and Mugs.” Keeping only the most commonly used things within reach makes getting dishware simpler.

The kitchen can be a welcoming, comfortable place in your house. Making some small changes to your appliances or the kitchen’s layout can help preserve the area as one where everybody can be safe and happy.