

# Healthy Homes

## Tips for People with Disabilities

### PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Disability has been defined in many ways. In general, a disability is a feature of the body, mind, or senses that can affect a person's daily life. Some disabilities are easy to see, such as when a person uses a wheelchair or when someone has lost an arm. Other disabilities, such as arthritis, may not be as easy to see. Some people may live with a disability all their lives. Others may have a disability when they are young or as an older adult.



People with disabilities sometimes have a harder time getting and staying healthy than people without disabilities. For example, people who use wheelchairs may not be able to get into a gym to exercise. A person who is deaf may not be able to communicate directly with his or her doctor.

Using universal design and architectural accessibility features helps people live independent lives. An example is latch door knobs that are easy for people with arthritis to use. Universal design can also help people without a disability. For example, a house entrance without a step helps parents with a stroller.

### HEALTH AND SAFETY TIPS

- ▶ Find the best health care professionals in your area to meet your needs.  
(<http://www.cdc.gov/Features/Disabilities/#healthcare>)
- ▶ Create a personal support network (sometimes called a self-help team) to help you prepare for a disaster. (Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA])  
([http://www.fema.gov/pdf/library/pfd\\_all.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/pdf/library/pfd_all.pdf))
- ▶ Build or modify your home for independence. (The American Occupational Therapy Association)  
(<http://www.aota.org/Consumers/Tips/Adults/HomeMods/35182.aspx>)
- ▶ When remodeling, find a contractor who can help you make the changes that allow you to stay in your home as long as you want. (AARP)  
([http://www.aarp.org/families/home\\_design/rate\\_home/a2004-03-23-caps.html](http://www.aarp.org/families/home_design/rate_home/a2004-03-23-caps.html))

### IMPORTANT LINKS

- ▶ Disability and health  
(<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/dh/infocenters.htm>)
- ▶ Disaster Preparedness for People with Disabilities and Special Needs (FEMA)  
([http://www.fema.gov/pdf/library/pfd\\_all.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/pdf/library/pfd_all.pdf))
- ▶ Universal design
  - Guidelines: Making Health Settings & Information Accessible  
(<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/dh/accessibilityguides.htm>)
  - Accessibility and universal design (U.S. Department of Labor and federal partners)  
(<http://www.disabilityinfo.gov/digov-public/public/DisplayPage.do?parentFolderId=5173>)
  - Home design (AARP)  
([http://www.aarp.org/families/home\\_design](http://www.aarp.org/families/home_design))

