

## **Cougar Home Safety Assessment 4.0 – Initial Visit**

Adapted with permission from:

The Safety for Older Consumers Home Safety Checklist, by Consumer Product Safety Commission. (N.D.) Retrieved on November 23, 2003 from <http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSCPUB/PUBS/701.html>. (This document is in the public domain).

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### **Instructions:**

- This occupational therapy assessment requires the administrator to have competency and knowledge in environmental and home safety.
- The Cougar Home Safety Assessment 4.0 contains 78 criteria that can be answered by observation, testing of certain home items, and questioning the resident.
- The Cougar Home Safety Assessment 4.0 includes the following categories: fire hazards/carbon monoxide, emergency/ medical, electrical/ water temperature, flooring/ hallways, kitchen, bedroom, bathroom(s), closets / storage areas, parking areas, entrances and disaster preparedness.
- The occupational therapist will be escorted on a tour of the resident's home or apartment and complete the Cougar Home Safety Assessment 4.0. The occupational therapist may use clinical reasoning to determine if areas are safe or unsafe. If any criterion is not applicable, mark it "N/A". Unsafe items found will be reviewed with the participants and recommendations will be offered.
- Tools required: thermometer, flashlight, reaching stick/yard stick to test smoke detector, pen, and a copy of the assessment.

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<b>FIRE HAZARDS / CARBON MONOXIDE</b>	<b>Environment Safe</b>	<b>Environment Unsafe</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1. There is a fire extinguisher present on every frequently used level of the house or apartment.			
2. There is a functional smoke detector on the ceiling in every level of the house or apartment (and near all bedrooms).			
3. Type and number of smoke detectors: Battery- Electric- Smoke detectors tested within last 6 months. Date tested:-			
4. There is a functional carbon monoxide detector present on every level of the house or apartment.			
5. Type and number of carbon monoxide detectors: Battery- Electric- Carbon monoxide detectors tested within last 6 months. Date tested-			
6. Portable heaters, ashtrays, candles, and other fire sources are located away from flammable objects.			
7. Flammable objects are located away from stationary fire sources such as fireplaces, stoves, or radiators.			
8. Flammable objects such as towels or curtains are located away from the stove area, and are at least 12" from the baseboard or portable heater.			
9. Chimney sweeps are conducted as follows: Every 3 months for wood; Bi-yearly for coal; Yearly for oil, gas, and any other fuel that does not produce smoke- if frequently used.			
<b>EMERGENCY / MEDICAL</b>	<b>Environment Safe</b>	<b>Environment Unsafe</b>	<b>Comments</b>
10. At least one medical alert device is accessible at all times while in the house, and may be reached without			

significant risk of physical injury.			
11. At least one cordless or accessible telephone is on each level of the house.			
12. Emergency numbers are posted on or near the telephone, or are easily accessible without significant risk of physical injury (i.e. primary physician, pharmacy, closest family member, etc).			
13. Flashlights are accessible and functional and may be reached without significant risk of physical injury.			
14. Assistive devices are in accessible areas (i.e. walkers, canes, low vision equipment, augmentative devices, long handled reacher, etc.).			
15. Medications are kept/stored in an accessible area and are no older than the expiration date.			
16. All areas of the home are well maintained and clean.			
17. A first aid kit, containing simple instructions, is easily accessible and may be reached without significant risk of physical injury.			

<b>ELECTRICAL / WATER TEMPERATURE</b>	<b>Environment Safe</b>	<b>Environment Unsafe</b>	<b>Comments</b>
18. Major appliances such as microwave oven, washer, dryer, and refrigerator may be accessed without significant risk of physical injury.			
19. All outlets and switches have plate covers, so that there is no exposed wiring and are in easy reach.			
20. All cords are placed out of the flow of traffic or safely covered.			
21. Cords are not attached to walls or baseboards with nails or staples.			
22. Cords are in good condition (not frayed or cracked).			
23. Electrical cords and appliance cords are located away from the sink and stove areas.			

24. Ground fault switches are present in bathroom and kitchen outlets. (According to Bianchina (2006), from <a href="http://www.doityourself.com">www.doityourself.com</a> "a ground fault interrupter, or ground fault circuit interrupter, is an electrical device that senses a fault in the electrical system and shuts down power to that device.")			
25. Small electrical appliances (such as hairdryers, curling irons, toasters and electric shavers etc) are unplugged when not in use.			
26. Outlets do not appear to be over-loaded.			
27. The water temperature is 120° F or lower as tested in a sink or tub.			

<b>FLOORING / HALLWAYS</b>	<b>Environment Safe</b>	<b>Environment Unsafe</b>	<b>Comments</b>
28. Floor surfaces are level with no more than ¼ to ½ inch beveled transitions.			
29. Carpeting is secure and level.			
30. If throw rugs are present, they have a slip-resistant backing.			
31. Hallways, passageways, and stairways are free of clutter.			
32. Hallways, passageways, and stairways between rooms have lighting available.			
33. Night lights are available in all areas.			
34. Indoor stairways have a secure railing on at least one side.			

<b>KITCHEN</b>	<b>Environment Safe</b>	<b>Environment Unsafe</b>	<b>Comments</b>
35. Dials are labeled on stove.			
36. There is no excessive grease or clutter on or around the stove area.			
37. Commonly used items are stored in accessible locations and may be reached without significant risk of physical injury.			

38. Garbage cans, pet bowls, and other objects are not located in the walking path.			
39. There is a stable step stool or reaching stick to access items above arms' reach.			
40. The countertops are free of rough or sharp edges.			
41. There is adequate lighting over the stove and sink areas, where food is cut or sliced.			
42. Refrigerator and freezer are at an acceptable temperature and do not contain expired food.			

<b>BATHROOM(S)</b>	<b>Environment Safe</b>	<b>Environment Unsafe</b>	<b>Comments</b>
43. A slip-resistant mat or surface is outside all bathtubs or showers.			
44. A slip-resistant mat or abrasive strips are in all the bathtubs or showers.			
45. The following bathroom areas are accessible and may be reached without significant risk of physical injury. Tub: Sink: Toilet:			
46. A properly installed grab bar or other stable surface is available and secure near the tub and toilet.			

<b>CLOSETS / STORAGE AREAS</b>	<b>Environment Safe</b>	<b>Environment Unsafe</b>	<b>Comments</b>
47. Closets and/or storage areas have lighting available either inside or outside of the closet.			
48. Commonly used items within closets or storage are accessible and may be reached without significant risk of physical injury.			
49. Walk space near closets and storage areas are free of clutter.			
50. The garage, if used, is accessible and has adequate lighting.			
51. The attic, if used, is accessible and has adequate lighting.			

52. All chemical products are stored in a safe manner.			
53. Any weapons such as guns, knives, ammunition, etc. are out of the view of visitors and are in locked storage.			

<b>PARKING AREA / ENTRANCES</b>	<b>Environment Safe</b>	<b>Environment Unsafe</b>	<b>Comments</b>
54. Parking areas have lighting available and are operable.			
55. Parking areas are reasonably level.			
56. Walkways and sidewalks are clutter free and level.			
57. Walkways and sidewalks have lighting available and are operable.			
58. The doorbell and/or door- knocker is/are functional.			
59. House numbers are visible on the home or mailbox.			
60. Outside stairways, if present, have a secure railing on at least one side.			
61. Entrances and doorways to home are free of clutter and hazards.			
62. Outside porches or exit areas have working lights available.			
63. Ramps, if present, are appropriately graded and have accessible handrails which may be reached without significant risk of physical injury.			

<b>BEDROOM</b>	<b>Environment Safe</b>	<b>Environment Unsafe</b>	<b>Comments</b>
64. The bed height allows for getting in and out safely.			
65. Pathways in the bedroom are clear.			
66. A phone is within reach of the bed.			
67. Lamps or light switches are within reach of each bed.			
68. Ash trays, smoking materials or other fire sources are located away from beds or bedding.			

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS	Environment Safe	Environment Unsafe	Comments
69. Disaster kit readily available. Includes: medication list, copy of medical records, extra food (non-perishable) and water, money, contact list, flashlight, Band-Aids, rope, extra clothes, and first aid kit.			
70. Copy of current medication list in a wallet/purse.			
71. Copy of medication in a sealed plastic bag placed in disaster kit.			
72. Extra month of medications available.			
73. Copy of physician's name and contact information readily available.			
74. Emergency escape route planned for evacuation.			
75. Extra food (also nonperishable) and water in the house to last seven days.			
76. Clothes and shoes available for immediate use during disaster or emergencies.			
77. Emergency car kit is available for evacuation.			
78. Plan for safe place in home in event of tornado/hurricane/earthquake.			

