



 MEDACO®

YOUR GUIDE TO A
SAFER BATHROOM



INTRODUCTION

A safer bathroom: the bathroom is one of the most potentially hazardous areas of the residence. Some common sense anticipations can make it a lot safer. If you don't find the answer to your question here – please send an email, and we will be pleased to help.



GENERAL BATHROOM SAFETY

- Any uneven features on the floor can be a risk – this includes loose mats which might cause a trip. To reduce risk, make sure there is a good colour contrast between floor coverings - so that the edge is clearly visible
- If the bathroom floor is at all slippery (ceramic tiles, for example) – consider installing a safer non-slip floor covering instead.
- Additional support around the room can make a lot of difference to safety. Grab rails near the bath and/or shower, sink and toilet are beneficial. There are lots to choose from: bear in mind that a textured surface will be easier to grip, especially with wet hands, and a brightly coloured rail will be easier to see against a white background. Strong plastic rails are simpler to install than metal in the bathroom, as they won't require earth-bonding. Whatever type of rail you choose, make sure that they are properly fitted and that the wall is strong enough. A light partition wall may not give adequate support, even if proper fastenings are used to attach the rail. In this situation, it would be more prudent to attach a wooden backboard to the other side of the partition wall, then fix the grab rail to this, through the thickness of the wall. Alternatively, in some situations, a floor to ceiling pole could be used instead.
- If door handles are hard to operate, replace them with easier lever-type handles. Locks on bathroom doors are not a good idea. The door should open outwards, to give easier access to you if you have a fall and need help.
- Scalding is another danger in the bathroom. Mixer taps with an anti-scald safety cut-out are a good idea, as is a temperature indicator – visual and/or audible – for bath water.
- Any radiators or other heaters in the bathroom should have a covering that remains cool enough not to burn someone who falls or leans against them.
- Substitute hard to manage tap handles with easier lever styles or even hands-free, infra-red controls. For tight budgets, there are lever adaptors which fit most standard taps.



A SAFER BATH

For many of us, a soak in the bath is one of the best ways of relaxing and easing those aching muscles or joints – but getting in and out of the tub can become quite challenging. There are various options to help, for every budget and from hi-tech to very much low-tech!

- A bath board or seat that fits across the top of the bath enables you to sit as you swing your legs over the edge. It can be combined with a bath grip that fits on the rim of the tub for extra support.
- A non-slip mat in the bottom of the bath can improve confidence and safety. Combined with a grab rail by the side to give support as you lower and raise yourself, this may be sufficient for many people.
- Walk-in baths are a great accessible option for those with limited mobility. These baths are specially adapted with a door in the side that you can walk in and out of. The doors may be hinged to open inwards and outwards or may raise themselves vertically. This used to be a very expensive option, but there are now a number of budget-conscious models available. Take a look at our range [here](#).
- Bath hoists can take the struggle out of getting down into the bath – then back out again. There are many different types, including the overhead hoist that lowers you to the bottom of the tub; the giant inflatable plastic cushion that gently deflates to carry you down; and variously styled, moulded and/or padded plastic seats. There are some designs that will lift you over the edge of the bath itself with a leg lift. Some models will lower you further than others – a point to check if you like a nice deep soak. If more than one person uses the bathroom, you may also want to consider the removability of the seat, leaving the tub free and clear for more able bathers. Take a look at our range of bath hoists [here](#).



SAFER SHOWERING

A shower can be faster, easier and more economical than a bath. Many of us already have one, instead of or as well as a bath. There are a number of features to look for to ensure safer showering.

- The shower tray should be as shallow as possible so that you can get in and out without having to negotiate a big step. A rough textured surface will make it less slippery.
- For anyone with more serious mobility problems, who perhaps needs to use the shower in a chair, then a tray which is flush with the floor, or has a very gentle ramp up, would be suitable – or a wet room.
- Conventional shower doors can be replaced with half-height ones, if you need someone to help you with washing.
- A stool and grab rail will mean that you can shower sitting down – or just have somewhere to sit while you dry your feet! Definitely makes life easier and more secure. There are many different styles of seat, including ones that can be pushed up against the wall when not in use, and others that are completely portable.
- Make sure that the shower you choose is thermostatically controlled, so that you don't get scalded, and that the controls are easy to use, even with wet hands. You can now get programmable showers that remember the right temperature for you, and ones with visual and/or audible temperature indicators.
- If you are replacing a bath with a shower, there are many large tray and door combinations available to fit in the space left by the bath. It's always a good idea anyway to have a nice roomy shower enclosure if possible – makes it easier and therefore safer to move about.
- Alternatively, a wet floor shower area does away with the need for an enclosure at all – but it doesn't work for every bathroom! It will involve a new floor with a slope to the integral drainage, waterproof floor and wall coverings - a careful thought for the siting of other elements of the bathroom, since water will be distributed over quite a large area.
- A shower trolley can be a safe option for those with limited mobility, or those who experience anxiety whilst being transferred in the bathroom. Take a look at our showering range [here](#).



A SAFER TOILET

Whatever else happens, being able to use the loo privately and comfortably is a fundamental expectation. If arthritis or any other impairment is making this difficult for you, there are lots of ways to ease the situation.

- You can raise the height of the toilet very simply, by replacing the seat with a raised one, or (less simply) by adding a plinth beneath it. Some raised toilet seats also have integral arms, to help you push yourself up.
- A sturdy frame around the loo, or one or two grab rails adjacent can help with extra support as you get up and down. Hinged grab rails push up against the wall when you don't need them, so are less obstructive in small bathrooms.
- There are now special seats available that give you a little lift, either electric, battery or air-powered.
- If dexterity is also a problem, you might well add a bidet facility to your loo – there are add-ons that fit most standard toilets, and make a very economical alternative to installing a separate bidet. Alternatively, you can install a purpose-built unit that combines toilet, bidet and warm air drying in one – but this is a more expensive option, of course.



MAINTENANCE AND SERVICING

It is important that bathroom equipment is maintained regularly to keep it in good working order.

equipment users need to ensure daily checks are completed as recommended in the instructions for use. In the domestic situation a relative carer, formal carer, a visiting health worker or the user might complete this.

The owner of the equipment has the duty to ensure faults are repaired. It is essential to keep a note of who is the owner and to whom faults should be reported. It is advisable to keep a written record of the date and type of faults reported and of the repairs carried out. Formal checks and servicing also need recording.

Making sure your facility is running at maximum operational capability is more than simply investing in the right equipment, you need to be certain everything is working at full capacity. Regular servicing and preventative maintenance of equipment ensures continued reliability, prolongs their useful life, minimises the risk of emergency breakdowns and ensures less exposure to manual handling related injuries to carers as a result of equipment failure, leading to increased staff absences.

Medaco offers a comprehensive range of flexible service contracts to suit your requirements and budget. find out more [here](#).

MEDACO BATHROOM SOLUTION

At Medaco we understand that with proper design techniques accessible bathrooms or wet rooms can give independence and confidence back to elderly or disabled individuals who currently are unable to use standard bathrooms. Helping you stay in your own home.

Our experience tells us that disability bathrooms must be designed to suit the requirements of each individual and at Medaco we have the knowledge to match the style and layout of the bathroom to the needs of the client. Contact us [here](#) to discuss your individual needs - helping you create an accessible, safer and relaxing bathroom.





support | equip | service

CONTACT US

If you want the peace of mind that round the clock care, solid finance schemes, and equipment that never lets you down can bring, then call us today on:

033 33 22 33 44

MAIA.LIVINGSTONE@MEDACO.CO.UK

MEDACO.CO.UK

USEFUL WEBSITES

Quality Care Commission
<https://www.cqc.org.uk/contact-us>

Health and Safety Executive
www.hse.gov.uk

Royal College of Nurses
<https://www.rcn.org.uk>

