

Living Safely

with disabilities and special health needs

Smoke Alarms



Children's
Specialized Hospital®

An RWJBarnabas Health facility



Smoke alarms are made to warn people that there may be a fire.

Smoke from a fire can spread very fast.

Smoke alarms are an important way to alert people when there is smoke in the area because the alarm warns me so that I can get out of danger quickly.



There are different types of smoke alarms.

There are specialized smoke alarms that have strobing lights and others that vibrate.

It is very important that I have smoke alarms that will be the safest for me and where I live. I can contact my local fire department for assistance finding smoke alarms that fit my specific needs.



When smoke alarms are working properly, an alarm sounds when it recognizes smoke.



I need to make sure to install standard smoke alarms in places that will help to keep me safe.



I should place smoke alarms on the other side of the door of every sleeping area.

If my house or apartment has more than one level, I place a smoke alarm on each level.

If the level doesn't have a bedroom, I need to be sure that there is a smoke alarm in the living room or family room near the stairs.

If I am in a large house, I may need extra smoke alarms.



Since smoke rises in the air, I need to place smoke alarms on the ceiling or as high as possible on a wall.



It is important for me to try to keep smoke alarms away from the kitchen because the alarm may sound when someone is cooking.

It is recommended that a smoke alarm be at least 10 feet from a stove or oven.



Specialized smoke alarms may need to be placed in different places.

I should contact my local fire department for assistance in placing these types of smoke alarms in my house or apartment.



It is important to make sure my smoke alarms are operating properly.

One way I can make sure my smoke alarms are operating properly is to test each smoke alarm at least once a month.

To do that, I press the test button on the smoke alarm to be sure it is working.

The alarm is loud and can be startling. If I am unable to test the alarm, I can ask someone to do it for me.



Smoke alarm batteries should be replaced at least once a year.

It is helpful to remind myself by putting it on my calendar.

If I need assistance changing the batteries in my smoke alarms, I can ask someone for assistance or reach out to my local fire department.



I should replace my smoke alarms when they are not working and when they are ten years old.

The date a smoke alarm was manufactured is located on the back of the alarm. I can ask for assistance if I need help checking that date and for assistance in replacing my smoke alarms.

For more Living Safely resources, visit www.rwjbh.org/cshlivingsafely

We value the expertise of our partners in safety who have demonstrated their commitment to inclusive healthy communities. Portions of this resource have been adapted from Safe Kids Worldwide (www.safekids.org).

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