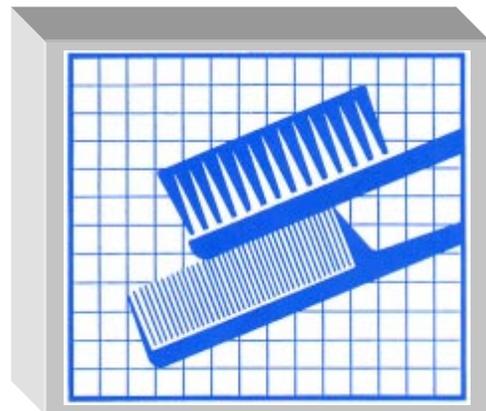


# Cleanliness Is Next To...

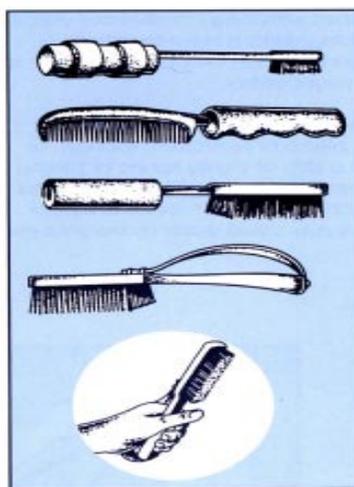


*Independent living tips to assist with housecleaning and storage.*

**W**e all feel better when we look good. If problems with weakness, coordination or paralysis make daily routines difficult, the bathroom is one room where modifications can really pay off. This brochure discusses just a few of a wide variety of adaptations and devices to make personal care and grooming routines easier.

## Grooming Aids

■ **Dental Care:** You can build up your toothbrush handle for easier gripping by adding a ready-made, built-up handle, a child's bicycle handle-grip, or a palm or wrist cuff, as illustrated. Foam tubing called Rubazote, available from medical suppliers, has a hollow center to insert a handle into. Extension handles, of the type used with eating utensils, can be helpful when you can't comfortably reach your mouth.



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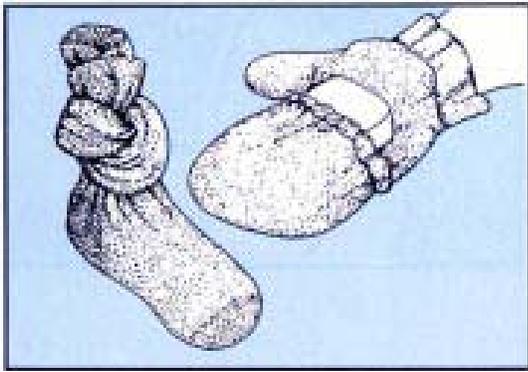
A denture brush can be attached to a sink or counter with a suction cup device. Flossing may be easier if you use a floss holder, available at most drug stores; it too can be fitted with a built-up handle. "Pump" style toothpaste dispensers are easier for some people to manipulate. A twisting is another possibility, while a third alternative is toothpowder, which you can simply dip a wet brush into.



key

■ **Hair Care:** The handle adaptations illustrated here can be used to modify combs and brushes as well. Extension handles are particularly useful if arm or

shoulder motion is limited, but your motions will lose some force due to loss of leverage. If you use a hair dryer, mount it on the wall to leave your hands free. The bracket should swivel so the dryer can blow in any direction. Hair washing is easiest in the shower; if you bathe in a tub, a hand sprayer is useful for rinsing. Pump dispensers or flip lids ease opening and closing shampoo and rinse bottles.

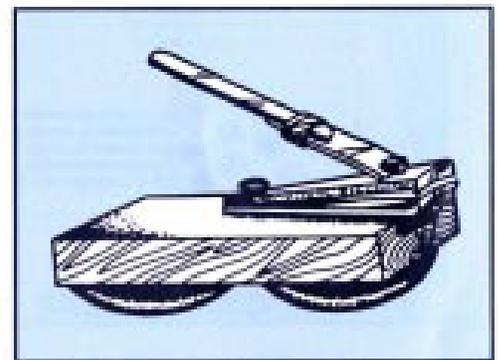
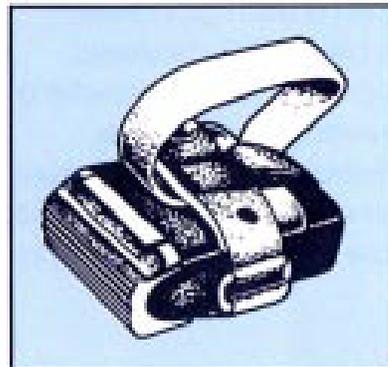


■ **Skin Care:** A soap mitt eliminates fussing with slippery bars of soap and awkward face cloths. You can buy one inexpensively, or make a simple one yourself from a small amount of terry cloth.

■ **Shaving:** Electric razors are easier to use and safer than blades. A bracket or clamp can be

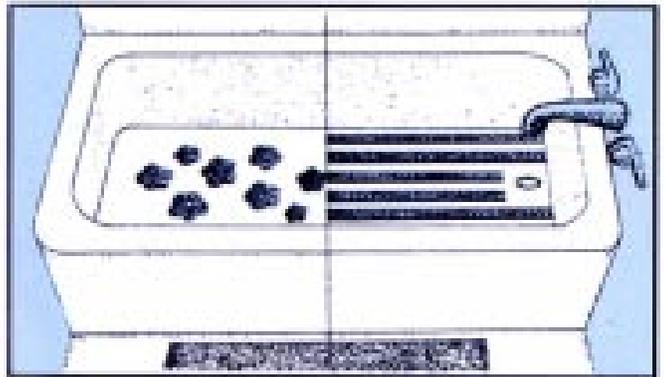
rigged to hold a razor firmly to a counter or wall while you move your face against it. A Velcro strap holder can help secure the razor in your hand.

■ **Nails:** A nail brush can be mounted on the edge of the counter or sink with suction cups. Attach a nail file or emery board to a piece of wood or tape it to the countertop to stabilize it for one-handed use. You can attach a nail clipper to a piece of plywood to give you better control, or increase the leverage by lengthening the handle as shown in the illustration. Larger clippers for trimming toe nails, available at most drug stores, may be easier to manipulate for fingernails, too.



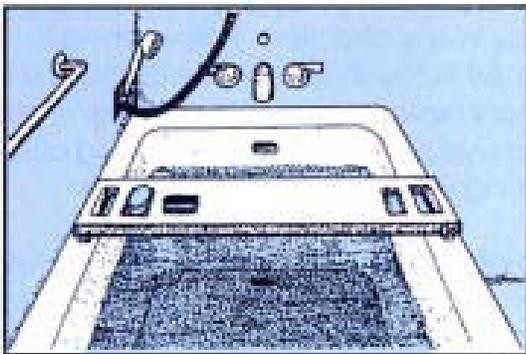
## Bath Aids

Safety is the first consideration. Safety treads or rubber mats on the bottom of tubs and showers are simple and inexpensive. Test and adjust water temperature before stepping into a bath or shower. Set water heaters below 120 degrees, and ask others not to run water elsewhere in the house to prevent temperature fluctuations. For extra protection, pressure balances to prevent surges of hot or cold water are available from plumbing supply stores.

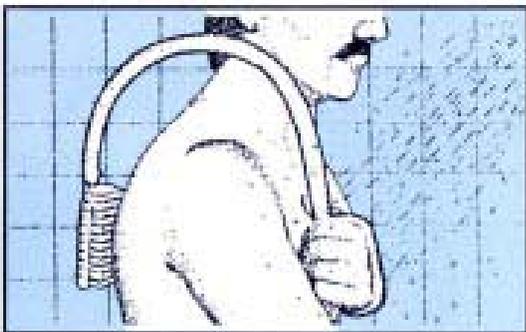
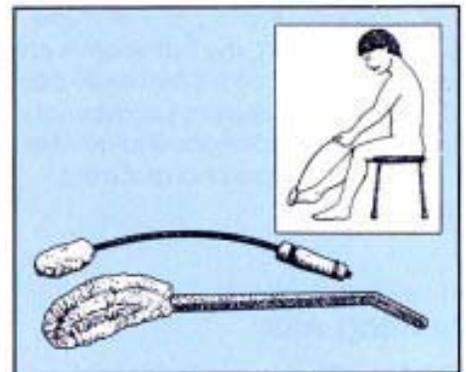


Hand rails that clamp to the side of the bathtub and gripping bars for tub and shower walls can be purchased from medical suppliers.

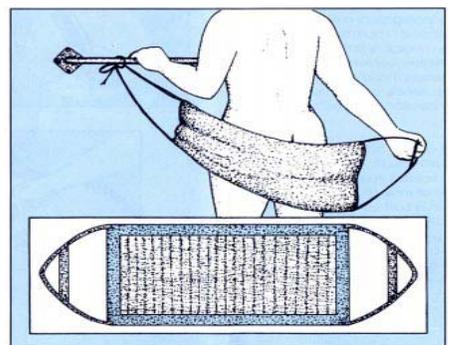
Organize items that you'll need before you get in the tub or shower. If you use a reaching aid, put it near the tub. A shelf across the tub keeps useful items near at hand and offers another surface to steady yourself against.



Bath brushes with long handles are useful for scrubbing various hard-to-reach places; handles can be built up or bent to improve your control.



Another way to scrub your back is to attach a piece of terry cloth, sponge



or loofah to a strip of sturdy fabric or plastic to pull from side to side. These scrubbers are available for sale at medical supply stores, but you could easily make your own.

## Further Information

There are many adaptations, small or large, inexpensive or quite costly, that can make getting around in your bathroom easier. For more information on the adaptations discussed here or additional suggestions, please contact:

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OSU-Seretean Wellness Center  
1514 W Hall of Fame  
Stillwater, OK 74078  
405-744-9748 (V/TTY)  
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FAX: 405-744-2487

The “Small Changes – Big Differences” Program for the elderly in need of Assistive Technology was developed by the Iowa Program for Assistive Technology.

ABLE Tech assists individuals with disabilities, family members, and disability-related providers, agencies and organizations across the state with getting AT:

- Device demonstration programs
- Device short-term loan programs
- Device re-utilization programs
- State Financing activities

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