

Tips for Preventing Falls

Falls are no joke--no matter your age! See these tips for preventing falls:

- Talk to your health care provider if you have any concerns about falling, and share your history of recent falls. Consider an assessment of your risk of falling.
- Ask your doctor what type of exercises would be good for improving your strength, balance, and flexibility. Find some activities you enjoy, and bring a friend.
- Review your medications with your doctor and your pharmacist at each visit and with each new prescription. Talk about side effects. Take medications only as prescribed.
- Get your vision and hearing checked every year, and update any eyeglasses and/or hearing aids.
- If you use a cane or crutches, or if you have to hold onto things when you walk, ask your doctor about training from a physical therapist or occupational therapist to learn about what types of devices might work best for you (and how to use them correctly).
- Limit your alcohol intake.
- Report any changes in your health condition, including illness, pain, numbness, swelling, or weakness.
- Be aware of your surroundings, and avoid changes in terrain, uneven ground, and slippery surfaces.

- Make your home a safe place
 - Make clear paths in and around your house by removing throw rugs, wires or cords, clutter, and other tripping hazards. (Or secure throw rugs with non-slip backing.)
 - Make stairs safe by removing objects, repairing faulty steps and/or coverings, increasing lighting, and securing hand rails that extend beyond the bottom step on both sides of the stairs.
 - Move frequently-used items to lower shelves and cabinets.
 - Use non-slip mats or strips in the shower or tub.
 - Install grab bars in key areas, such as inside the tub and next to the toilet.
 - Have bright lamps and light switches in convenient places, and use night-lights to help in the dark.
 - Provide stable chairs with armrests.
 - Wear shoes with slip-resistant soles inside your house.
 - If you must, use a step stool with a handle for balance, rather than a chair.

Additional Resources:

“CDC Check for Safety: A Home Fall Prevention Checklist for Older Adults” at www.cdc.gov

“My Falls-Free Plan” at www.champ-program.org/static/Fallfreeplan.pdf

National Council on Aging at www.ncoa.org/healthy-aging/falls-prevention

**For more information, contact Lindley Curtis, Support Services Coordinator
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