

Fall Prevention at Home

Falls can happen at home for many reasons. There are several things that are known to add to your risk for falling.

These include:

- Poor vision or hearing
- History of falls
- Use of aids, such as a cane
- Poor nutrition
- Certain medications
- Being over 65 years old
- Lack of strength, balance or endurance

4 Ways to Reduce Your Chances of a Fall

Increasing your strength, balance and endurance. Good balance can prepare your body for the unexpected and keep you active and independent. Endurance is important for the health of your heart and lungs.

Know your medications. Taking more than five medications can increase the risk of falling. Keep your medications up-to-date and talk with your pharmacist or doctor about these medications before stopping or changing your dosages.

Vision. Have your vision checked at least once a year. If prescribed wear your glasses and keep them clean.

Reduce Home Hazards. Also provided is a checklist of hazards in the home that may increase your risk of a fall. Use this checklist to help reduce your risks of falls at home.



Home Hazard Checklist

Lighting

- Replace dim, burned out or glaring lights with bright, soft white light bulbs
- Use a night light
- Make sure lights are easy to turn on and off
- Keep a flashlight available

Clear Hallways and Stairs

- Remove clutter, especially from hallways and stairwells
- Use handrails while taking the stairs
- Place non-skid treads or bright reflective tape to mark the edge of the stairs

Floors

- Remove throw rugs
- Place non-skid treads or double-sided tape under area rugs
- Keep floors free from clutter
- Wipe up spills immediately
- Make sure floors are not slippery

Bathroom

- Use a raised toilet seat for ease in getting up and down from toilet or use a bedside commode.
- Use luke warm water and avoid very hot water (Always test water with back of hand before getting in).
- Consider a hand-held shower head, shower chair and handrails in the tub
- Place non-skid adhesive strips in the tub
- Use liquid soap or soap on a rope to prevent dropping soap

Other

- Store items used most often at waist level
- Select furniture with armrests for support in getting up and down
- If you do not have a cordless phone, keep it on a low table.