

What You Can Do to Prevent Falls

Many falls can be prevented. By making some changes, you can lower your chances of falling.

Fall Facts

- Falls are the **leading cause of injury deaths** and the most common cause for **nonfatal injuries**.
- **More than one third** of adults ages 65 and older **fall each year in the United States**.

feel better. Exercises that improve balance and coordination (like Tai Chi) are the most helpful. Lack of exercise leads to weakness and increases your chances of falling. Ask your doctor or health care provider about the best type of exercise program for you.

Four things YOU can do to prevent falls:

1. **Begin a regular exercise program**
2. **Have your health care provider review your medicines**
3. **Have your vision checked**
4. **Make your home safer**

1. Begin a regular exercise program

Exercise is one of the most important ways to lower your chances of falling. It makes you stronger and helps you



2. Have your health care provider review your medicines

Have your doctor or pharmacist review all the medicines you take, even over-the-counter medicines. As you get older, the way medicines work in your body can change. Some medicines, or combinations of medicines, can make you sleepy or dizzy, and can cause you to fall.

3. Have your vision checked

Have your eyes checked by an eye doctor at least once a year. You may be wearing the wrong glasses or have a condition like glaucoma or cataracts that limits your vision. Poor vision can increase your chances of falling.

4. Make your home safer

About half of all falls happen at home. To make your home safer:

- Remove things you can trip over (like papers, books, clothes and shoes) from stairs and places where you walk.
- Remove small throw rugs or use double-sided tape/rug grippers to keep the rugs from slipping.
- Keep items you use often in cabinets you can reach easily without using a step stool.
- Have grab bars put in next to your toilet and in the tub or shower.
- Use non-slip mats in the bathtub and on shower floors.
- Improve the lighting in your home. As you get older, you need brighter lights to see well. Hang lightweight curtains or shades to reduce glare.
- Have handrails and lights put in on all staircases.
- Wear shoes both inside and outside the house. Avoid going barefoot or wearing slippers.



5. Other Safety Tips

- Keep emergency numbers in large print near each phone.
- Put a phone near the floor in case you fall and can't get up.
- Think about wearing an alarm device that will bring help in case you fall and can't get up.
- National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. (2006). www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/toolkit/WhatYouCanDoToPreventFalls.htm *What To Do If You Fall*.

WHAT TO DO?	CALL MY HOME HEALTH AGENCY WHEN:	CALL 911 WHEN:
<p>Trouble moving or fell</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dizziness or trouble with balance • Fell and hurt myself • Fell but didn't hurt myself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fell and have severe pain

Resource: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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