



Checklist for Reducing Your Risk of Falling

Information for seniors and family caregivers

Here's a list of steps to consider as part of a conscious effort to reduce your risk of falling.

Get enough exercise.

- If you have an active exercise program, stick with it.
- If you don't have one, talk with your doctor or other health care provider about starting a fall prevention exercise plan that includes aerobic, strengthening and balance activities.
- If you are in physical or occupational therapy, discuss falls and how to prevent them.

Talk to your doctor . . .

- If you have experienced a fall.
- If you have experienced episodes of dizziness.
- If you think you may have problems with balance, vision, or side effects from medications.
- About having your balance problems tested, diagnosed and treated.

Make good lifestyle choices.

- Are you eating regular, healthy meals?
- Are you drinking enough water each day?
- Do you limit your use of alcohol?
- Do you get enough sleep?

Be aware of your surroundings.

- Plan your steps a little more carefully than you used to.
- Be especially alert when in new surroundings and while traveling.

If you've become unsteady in walking . . .

- Ask your doctor about getting a cane, walker, or other assistive device.
- Get professional help learning how to use assistive devices properly.
- Wear slippers or socks with traction.

Give your home a careful safety check, and get rid of hazards, such as . . .

- Rough floor surfaces.
- Throw rugs.
- Poor lighting.
- Exposed extension cords.
- Cluttered walkways and stairs.

Consider installing . . .

- Grab bars beside toilet and in bath and shower.
- Hand rails on stairs.
- Nightlights.
- Bedside phone (or keep your cell phone within reach).

Discuss your concerns about falling . . .

- With your doctor or physical therapist.
- With close family and friends.
- With your senior living community or home care provider.

If you know you have a higher risk of falling . . .

- Ask whether your doctor recommends wearing hip protectors.
- Consider subscribing to an emergency response program.

