

Why fall prevention is important

According to the Center for Disease Control*, Falls are a major threat to the health and independence of older adults, people aged 65 and older. Each year in the United States, nearly one-third of older adults experience a fall.

Falls can be devastating. About one out of ten falls among older adults result in a serious injury, such as a hip fracture or head injury, that requires hospitalization. In addition to the physical and emotional pain, many people need to spend at least a year recovering in a long-term care facility. Some never return to their homes.

Falls can be deadly. Falls are the leading cause of injury deaths among older adults. The rate of fall-related deaths among older adults in the United States has risen significantly over the past decade.



Learn to be prepared to get up in the middle of the night- It's important to have any assistive devices close at hand.

Falls are costly. Fall-related injuries among older adults, especially among older women, are associated with substantial economic costs. In 2000, direct medical costs for fatal and nonfatal fall injuries totalled \$19 billion.

Falls are preventable. By offering effective fall prevention programs in our communities, we can reduce falls and help older adults live better, longer lives.



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4 things YOU can do to prevent falls:

Exercise to improve your balance and strength

Have your healthcare provider review all your medications

Have your vision checked and update your eyeglasses

Make your home safer

Identify Hazards in your home to help prevent falls

Fall Prevention

Staying Safe in Your Home



For more information contact us at:

860.886.1463

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Fall Prevention

What YOU can do...



Home-Safety Checklist

Take some time to review this checklist and make changes in your home to help you prevent falls.

Floors

Remove throw-rugs or use double-sided tape or a non-slip backing so the rugs won't slip.

Pick up books, magazines, shoes, blankets and any other objects from the floor. Keep the floor clear to reduce trip hazards.

Ensure that wires and cords are against the wall so you can't trip over them.

Have someone help you rearrange furniture so you have a straight path from one room to the next.

Stairs and Steps

Always keep objects off the stairs.

Fix loose or uneven steps and make sure carpet is securely attached to the steps.

Make sure the stairs are well-lit and that you turn on the light when climbing or descending the stairs.

Fix loose handrails, or add new ones. Ensure that there is one on each side of the stairs, and that they go the full length of the stairs.

Kitchen

Move items you use most to lower shelves.

If you need to use a step stool to reach something, make sure it has a bar to hold on to and never climb up onto a chair.

Bathroom

Put a non-slip rubber mat or self-stick bath grips on the floor of the tub or shower.

Have someone install a grab bar inside the tub and near the toilet to help you stand up.

Bedrooms

Place a lamp next to the bed where it is easily accessible.

Add a night light to help light your path from the bed to the bathroom.

If you use a cane or a walker, make sure it is accessible from the bed and use it when you get up.

Whole House

Wear shoes with non-skid soles, not slippers, and don't go barefoot.

Paint a contrasting color on the edge of wooden steps to make them more visible.

Think about wearing an alarm that will summon help if you do fall and can't get up.

Pets can make good companions, but they can also be a trip hazard.



Inspect Your Home

It's important to walk through your home and look for potential hazards and fix them. You can have a family member or friend help you, as they might see things that you haven't noticed. Take the time to make your home safe and reduce your chances of falling.

Some helpful resources:

- www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Falls/CheckListForSafety.html
- www.fallprevention.org