



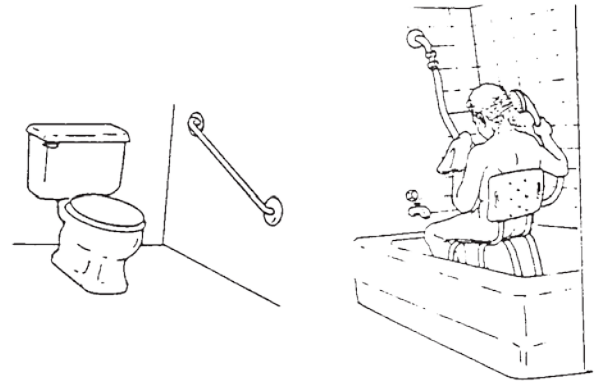
Fall Prevention in the Home

Falls are a leading cause of injury and death in the home, especially for older adults. Most falls can be avoided by using the following tips:

1. Make your home safe

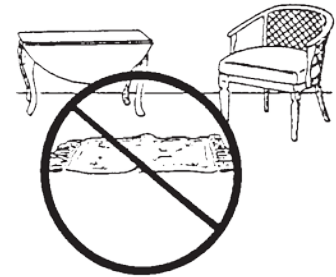
In the bathroom

- Install grab bars in the tub and around the toilet
- Use a non-skid shower mat
- Use a hand held shower head
- Install a raised toilet seat
- Use a shower bench to sit while showering and drying
- In a sitting position, dry your feet before getting out of the tub or shower
- Sit to shave, apply makeup or fix your hair
- Use a urinal or bedside commode if you have problems with urination or diarrhea that cause you to rush



In the living room

- No throw rugs or area rugs
- Remove cords and clutter from walkways
- Use furniture with firm cushions and arms to help you get up safely
- Make walkways wider



In the bedroom

- No throw rugs or area rugs
- Turn on the light before getting out of bed in the dark
- Sit for a minute at the edge of the bed before getting up
- Sit while dressing
- Use equipment to help with dressing
- Make sure bed covers do not drag on the floor

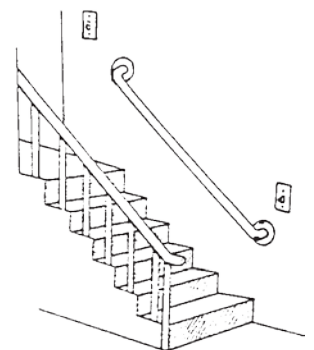
In the kitchen

- Put commonly used items in easy to reach places
- Slide heavy objects along counter top to avoid carrying
- Use a cart to move heavy items
- Use kitchen chairs that don't have wheels
- No throw rugs
- Use a kitchen timer to avoid unnecessary trips to check food



Stairs

- Use handrails; install handrails on both sides if possible
- Install light switch at the top and bottom of the staircase
- Place bright colored tape at the edge of each step
- Install a non-skid surface on each step
- Remove all clutter

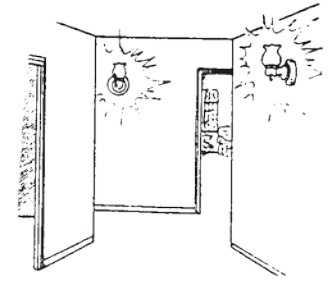


Lighting

- Use night lights
- Make sure a light switch is at the entry of every room
- Use an automatic light timer to avoid walking into a dark house
- Try to use glare-free light bulbs

Outdoors and entries

- Walkways are free of clutter
- Walkways and entrances are well lit and salted during ice/snow
- Steps have railings and lighting
- Consider motion sensors



2. Take your medication

Be sure to take medications as instructed by your doctor or pharmacist.

- Keep a current list of all medications with you at all times
- Ask your doctor to review the list at every visit
- Know the purpose and possible side effects of medications
- Some medications can make you dizzy or lose your balance

3. Stay active

Staying active is one of the most important ways to stay strong, keep your balance and lower your chances of falling.

- Lack of exercise can lead to weakness and problems with walking
- Use shoes that fit well and have non-slip soles
- Use a cane or walker as instructed by a therapist
- Be careful of ice and bad weather

4. Other hints

- **See your doctor if you fall or feel unsteady when you walk.**
The doctor may recommend physical therapy to help prevent falls.
- Be sure your clothing fits well and does not cause you to trip
- Be sure to wear your glasses
- Have your eyes checked regularly
- Drinking alcohol may make your balance worse
- Increase the number of phones in the house
- Keep a cordless phone with you
- Do not rush
- Never use a chair as a step stool
- Clean up spills
- Carry small, light loads
- Consider a Lifeline® or other emergency alert system

