Fall Prevention

A fall can cause serious injury in anyone—for those with osteoporosis falls can lead to broken bones! Here are some tips to help you prevent falls.

What can I do to prevent falls?

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<th>Shoes</th>
<th>Balance</th>
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Shoes

Some falls result from the wrong footwear. Good shoes should:

- Be easy to tie securely
- Be flat-soled with a wide base (no high heels)
- Have non-skid traction

Alcohol

AVOID alcohol!

- Alcohol interferes with both alertness and balance.
- Avoid even light alcohol if you are at high risk for falls.

Visiting Nurse

Home safety assessments have been proven to reduce falls. Your doctor may want to order a home safety evaluation by a visiting nurse to check the following:

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<th>Floors</th>
<th>Tack down loose throw rugs and secure electrical cords.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lighting</td>
<td>Improve lighting in stairs and hallways.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stairways</td>
<td>Secure runners and loose banisters.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bathroom</td>
<td>Add grab bars near toilet and bath. Use a shower chair.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kitchen</td>
<td>Get rid of slippery wax on floors. Make things easy to reach.</td>
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</table>
Eyesight

- Poor vision causes falls. Make sure you have had a recent eye check.
- Bifocals are especially dangerous. See if your eye doctor can help you reduce the risk.

Sedatives (Avoid)

- Use of sedatives can increase the risk of falls significantly.
- Benzodiazepines (Valium, Ativan and similar drugs) are the most dangerous offenders.
- Also beware of muscle relaxants and pain medications.

Balance

- Your doctor can do a simple test to check your balance.
- A physical therapy evaluation can help determine whether you need a cane, walker, or balance training.

Orthostasis

This term means a drop in blood pressure when you stand up. Orthostasis can lead to light-headedness and lead to falls. Your doctor will check your blood pressure lying and standing to see if you have orthostasis.

- If you suffer from orthostasis, sit on the edge of the bed for 5 minutes before standing.
- There medicines that might make orthostasis worse. Your doctor can check you medicine list and make adjustments.

Night Lights

- Do you have night lights in the bedroom, halls and bathrooms?
- If not, there is even more chance that a visiting nurse home visit will help.

Exercise

Ask your health care provider what kind of exercise program is best for you.

- Exercise has been proven to reduce falls.
- Weight-bearing exercise increases bone density.
- Tai Chi has been shown to prevent falls.