

## 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?

Shoes  
Alcohol (avoid)  
Visiting nurse  
Eyesight  
Sedatives (avoid)

Balance  
Orthostasis  
Night lights  
Exercise

### 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:

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



## 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 are medicines that might make orthostasis worse. Your doctor can check your 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.



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