

FALL PREVENTION

STARTS WITH A VISIT TO YOUR DOCTOR

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DID YOU KNOW?

Falling is a leading cause of serious injury for adults 60 and older. These types of injuries can lead to a loss of independence and sometimes even death. You can cut down the chance of falling by visiting your doctor for a checkup and making a few changes around your home.

National Falls Prevention Awareness Day is Tuesday, Sept. 22. It's the perfect time to take the steps necessary to better your health and secure your home to reduce your risk of falling.

COMMON RISK FACTORS THAT LEAD TO FALLING



Weakness in the core and lower body



Medicines that cause dizziness or drowsiness, including antidepressants and sedatives



Vision problems or poor lighting



Foot pain or wearing the wrong size or type of shoes



Tripping hazards such as throw rugs, clutter on the floor, and uneven steps or pathways



A low vitamin D level in the bloodstream



The first step to protecting yourself from falls is to see your doctor. Your primary care physician (PCP) can review your medications, including over-the-counter medications and supplements, and talk with you about other risk factors.

If you have already fallen, or are afraid of falling, be sure to tell your clinician

They can help by:

- checking your level of vitamin D and recommending supplementation, if necessary
- telling you about exercises that can improve your balance and increase lower body strength
- changing your medicines or adjusting your dosages
- checking your vision

USE A FALL PREVENTION CHECKLIST TO MAKE YOUR HOME SAFER



Use brighter light bulbs in lamps and overhead lights.



Put new lights in dark or shadowy areas.



Pick up clutter and put appliances, such as vacuum cleaners, away after use.



Remove throw rugs.



Install railings on both sides of stairways. Install grab bars in the bathtub, shower and next to the toilet.

The risk of falling does not have to increase with age. A visit with your doctor and a few simple, low-cost changes to your home can make a difference. Act now to reduce your chance of falling.