

Fall prevention:

The home can be hazardous

If you are the right age with the right risk factors, the home can be a dangerous place. More than half of the falls seniors take happen indoors, where they live, often with serious consequences.

Here are several risk factors that drive that statistic:

- Poor vision or hearing;
- A history of falls;
- Use of aids, such as a cane;
- Poor nutrition;
- Certain medications, such as medications for anti-anxiety or hypertension, sedatives or narcotics;
- Being 65 years or older;
- Home hazards, such as slippery floors, loose rugs or cords on the floor.



Here are some things you can do to reduce your risk of falling:

Hallways and Stairs

- Remove clutter.
- Rely on handrails when using the stairs.
- Place non-skid treads or attach bright reflective tape to mark the edges of the stairs.



Lighting

- Replace dim, burned out or glaring lights with bright, soft white bulbs.
- Use a night light.
- Make sure that lights are easy to reach.
- Keep a flashlight handy.



Floors

- Remove scatter rugs and throw rugs from your home.
- Place non-skid treads or double-sided tape under area rugs.
- Keep your floors free from clutter.
- Wipe up spills immediately.
- Make sure your floors are not slippery.



Bathroom

- Use a raised toilet seat and safety frame.
- Set the water temperature at 120 degrees or lower to prevent burns and falls trying to avoid burns.
- Consider installing a hand-held shower head, shower chair and handrails in your tub.
- Place non-skid adhesive strips on the bottom of your tub.
- Use liquid soap or soap-on-a-rope to help avoid dropping your soap.



Other locations

- Store items you use frequently at waist level.
- Select furniture with armrests for support as you are getting up and sitting down.
- Keep your telephone within easy reach.
- If you experience dizziness and weakness from poor nutrition or from changes in medication, you should consult your provider or outpatient nutrition therapist.

