



LET'S TALK ABOUT . . .

FALLS PREVENTION: HOME SAFETY TIPS

Did you know more than 50% of falls happen at home? The most common hazard is tripping over something on the floor. Take precautions to keep you and your loved ones safe.

Tips for making your home safer

Create more space

- Rearrange or remove furniture so you can easily move around.
- Keep high traffic areas clear of obstacles such as planters, pet gear, wastebaskets and laundry.
- Secure electrical cords and computer cables close to walls.
- Keep the things you use most often within easy reach (between knee and shoulder height).

Pay attention to where you walk

- Wipe up spills at once – keep utility towels handy.
- Avoid using floor wax or use a non-skid variety.
- Avoid or thoroughly rinse off cleaning products that leave a slippery residue.
- Remove or secure area carpets with double-sided tape or non-slip backing rugs.
- Put a bell on the collars of pets so they can be avoided underfoot.
- Make sure outdoor walkways and drives are smooth and level.

Ensure good vision

- Address [vision challenges](#) such as inadequate eyeglass prescriptions and cataracts.
- Avoid moving about in the dark.
- Install nightlights in halls and bathrooms.
- Take time moving about – rushing is a major cause of falls.
- Open window coverings during the day.
- Have adequate lighting in stairwells, halls and pathways with light switches at each end.
- Use non-glare long-life LED bulbs and get help changing them.
- Remove reading glasses before going up or down stairs.
- Have a lamp or light-switch within easy reach of your bed.
- Make sure outdoor areas are well lit.

Consider some adaptations

- Make sure stairs (even single steps) and decks have easy-to-grasp sturdy railings on all sides.
- Remove door sills where possible.
- Use a different colour to show a change in surface type or level.
- Purchase – and always use – a stable step stool with a safety rail for reaching high places.
- Keep a sturdy seat near entrances for putting on and removing outdoor footwear.
- Use sturdy chairs with armrests to give support when going from a sitting to standing position.
- Install non-slip strips or use a rubber mat if your shower or tub doesn't have a non-slip surface.
- Install sturdy grab bars by the toilet, bathtub and shower.

This handout is intended as a general introduction to the topic. As each person is affected differently, speak with your health care professional for individual advice. Copyright © BC Balance and Dizziness. Individuals may print a copy for their own use. [Professional members](#) of BC Balance and Dizziness may distribute copies for their own clients. Written permission is required from BC Balance and Dizziness for all other uses.

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