

The Three H's

OF FALLS PREVENTION

Home. Health. Habits.



Falls are not a normal part of aging. Older adults can reduce their risk of falling by paying attention to the "Three H's:" Your home, your health, and your habits.



HOME

- Inspect carpets, rugs, and hard floors for damage and raised edges; fix as soon as possible.
- Increase lighting, particularly around walkways, doorways, and stairs.
- Rearrange furniture for clear paths; keep clutter out of walkways.
- Make sure stairs have handrails that are sturdy; repair if needed.
- Mark the front edges of steps with bright colored tape or paint.
- Keep one hand free when walking and climbing stairs; use a bag or backpack to carry things.
- Have a professional install grab bars in your tub or shower and next to the toilet and sink.
- Install a non-slip mat or strips in your bathtub or shower and a non-slip rug outside it.
- Store commonly used kitchen items where you won't have to stretch or bend to reach them.
- Clean up kitchen and bathroom spills immediately.
- Keep a lamp or flashlight next to where you sleep and use it if you have to get up at night.
- Invest in home assistants, smart plugs, smart lightbulbs, and two-way video doorbells you can control with your voice or phone.



HEALTH

- Ask your health care provider about your falls risk factors, including chronic pain, trouble sleeping, medications, or vision and hearing loss.
- Ask your health care provider for a referral for a home assessment or community falls prevention classes.
- Tell your health care provider if you have fallen or experienced problems with walking or balance over the past year.
- Eat a well-balanced diet with foods that are low in salt, sugar, and fat, and high in fiber, protein, calcium, and vitamin D.
- Drink plenty of water.



HABITS

- Talk to your health care provider about light to moderate exercises to build strength, balance, and stamina.
- Ask your local senior center or area agency on aging about balance and exercise programs.
- Use a cane or a walker if you have trouble walking or standing for long periods.
- Be aware of your surroundings and focus on one task at a time.
- Take extra time and care when getting up from a chair or your bed.
- If you can't see the path in front of you, due to lighting, weather, debris, or other factors, find another way or get help.
- Don't step over pets on the floor; make them move.



**Department of
Aging**