

7 Safety Tips for Fall Prevention

Trips and falls are the leading cause of injury related hospitalizations and deaths according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Learning to prevent these falls can help seniors lead more active and independent lives. These great tips will help prevent falls and help seniors become more aware of potential hazards and how to avoid them.



1) Keep your hands empty while walking whenever possible. Free hands allow you greater access to grab on to furniture, walls, or rails for support when needed. It also allows you to be centered and balanced. Full hands might unevenly distribute the weight you are carrying and may result in falls of their own volition. Either way, full hands limit your ability to catch yourself from falling.

2) Remove clutter and obstructions from all walking pathways in your home. The more things you must maneuver around the greater the odds are that you will slip, trip, or fall due to miscalculations or being thrown off balance.

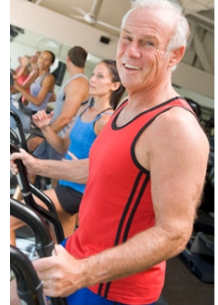
3) Wear sturdy shoes that provide active support. Make sure your shoes fit your feet and always wear shoes that have backs. Avoid house slippers, flip flops, and going around without shoes or walking around with only socks on your feet. Now is the time to really invest in good shoes for your feet that will provide support and comfort. This is not the time to visit the discount store. Make this a solid investment that is designed to last.



4) Install sturdy and supportive rails on all stairs or steps in the home. Even if it's only a short step down it's important that you have something to grab onto for support going up or down the steps. It is also important to keep the steps/stairs free of clutter and well lit at all times. Also make a point of installing grab bars in the shower and toilet area of the bathroom for additional support and in case of slips or falls.

5) Install motion or sound activated lights in your home so you aren't walking around in the dark or groping blindly for switches. Motion activated lights will also go off after several minutes of inactivity as well so you do not need to turn them off upon leaving the room. Also install nightlights in all rooms that come on automatically whenever it is dark.

6) Do daily exercises that promote balance. A loss of balance is one of the most common reasons for falls among seniors. The more frequently you do exercises that are designed to promote a sense of balance the lower the odds are that you will have a fall for this reason.



7) Don't climb step ladders or stools. Instead of climbing to reach things that are high up or located on top shelves, consider investing in a grab bar or asking someone to come over and help you rearrange your kitchen so that frequently used items are within easy reach and those that are rarely used are stored higher.



Senior fall prevention may not seem all that important today but if the time ever comes these tips will seem critical. Don't wait until it's too late to get the perfect backup plan for your independent lifestyle:

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