

STAYING STEADY: HOME CARE GUIDE TO FALL PREVENTION

Falls are one of the most serious health risks facing older adults, but they don't have to be an inevitable part of aging. Learn tips to implement at home and consult your physician for customized recommendations to meet your needs.

wellcarebyrn.com





Falls are one of the most serious health risks facing older adults, but they don't have to be an inevitable part of aging. With the proper knowledge and preventive measures, seniors can significantly reduce their risk of falling and maintain their independence longer.

Understanding the Risk

Each year, one in four Americans aged 65 and older experiences a fall. While this statistic might sound alarming, it's essential to understand that many falls are preventable. The first step in prevention is recognizing common risk factors, which include:

- Changes in vision and hearing
- Decreased muscle strength and balance
- Chronic health conditions like arthritis or diabetes
- Medications that can affect balance or cause dizziness
- Environmental hazards in the home

Making Home Safer

Every senior's home should be a safe haven, not a hazard course. Consider these essential home modifications:

In the Bathroom:

Install grab bars next to the toilet and in the shower. Consider a shower chair and non-slip mats. Ensure the bathroom is well-lit, especially at night. A raised toilet seat can make transfers safer and easier.

In the Living Areas:

Remove or secure loose rugs and eliminate clutter from walkways. Arrange furniture to create clear walking paths. Install handrails on both sides of staircases. Ensure all rooms have adequate lighting, including night lights in hallways and bathrooms.

In the Kitchen:

Organize frequently used items within easy reach to avoid stretching or using step stools. Clean spills immediately to prevent slipping. Consider installing pull-out shelves to make items more accessible.

Working with Expert Home Care Providers

Regular check-ups play a vital role in fall prevention.

Annual Vision Checks: Keep prescriptions up-to-date and consider getting separate glasses for indoor and outdoor use. Discuss how to manage conditions like cataracts or glaucoma that can affect balance.

Medication Reviews: Have your doctor or pharmacist review all medications, including over-the-counter drugs, as some combinations can increase fall risk. Never change medications without consulting your healthcare provider.

Bone Health: Discuss vitamin supplementation and bone density screening with your healthcare provider. Strong bones won't prevent falls but can reduce the risk of serious injury if a fall occurs.

Walking Aids: If recommended, use a cane or walker adequately fitted to your height. Learn the correct technique from a physical therapist. Keep devices well-maintained with good grip tips.

Proper Footwear: Wear shoes with non-slip soles and good support, even indoors. Avoid backless slippers or walking in socks. Consider athletic shoes with good arch support for daily activities.

Creating a Fall Response Plan

Despite best efforts, falls can still occur. Being prepared can reduce anxiety and ensure a quick response:

- Keep emergency numbers in large print near each phone
- Consider a medical alert device, especially if living alone
- Practice getting up from a fall with your physical therapist
- Keep a charged cell phone within reach at all times

WellCare by RN

(561) 206 – 0015

info@wellcarebyrn.com

wellcarebyrn.com