



## Ways to Protect Yourself from Falls

At least one-third of all falls involve hazards in the home: slippery floors, throw rugs, poor lighting, cluttered hallways, unsafe stairways and uneven door thresholds can all contribute to the danger of falling.

Exercising often can help reduce your risk of falling. It increases muscle and bone strength and can help improve balance and flexibility.

### **Following is a list of suggestions that may help reduce your risk of falling:**

- Eat nutritiously, consuming foods with calcium.
- Reduce or eliminate the consumption of alcohol.
- Arrange furniture for maximum open space and clear walkways. (at least 36")
- Keep floors free of clutter. Do not place electrical cords in walkways.
- Discard throw rugs or use non-slip tapes underneath.
- Install handrails on both sides of staircases. Use both rails when traveling up or down the stairs. Keep stairways clear of clutter. Use caution on all staircases (short or long).
- Install grab bars by the toilet and in the bathtub. Water can create an extremely slippery surface. Use non-skid mats in the shower or tub.
- Wear low-heeled shoes with rubber soles that provide adequate arch support.
- If you become dizzy getting out of bed or a chair, take a moment to get your balance. Be careful not to stand up too quickly.
- Use canes and walkers if you need help keeping your balance. If necessary, have someone assist you when you walk outside your home.
- Have your eyes and ears checked by a doctor regularly, and follow your doctor's advice about the use of hearing aids and glasses.
- Ask your doctor about side effects of medications, including drowsiness, disorientation or dizziness.
- Consider installing timers on lights. Use night lights.