

USE THIS CHECKLIST TO MINIMIZE FALL RISK

Falls can occur anywhere in your home.

The following checklist is designed to help individuals minimize the risk of falling in their home.

Outside Your Home

- Paint the edges and any steps that are especially narrow or are higher or lower than the rest.
- Paint outside stairs with a mixture of sand and paint for better traction. Keep outdoor walkways clear and well lit.
- Clear snow and ice from entrances and sidewalks.

Inside Your Home

- Remove all extraneous clutter in your house.
- Keep telephone and electrical cords out of pathways.
- Tack rugs and glue vinyl flooring so they lie flat. Remove or replace rugs or runners that tend to slip, or attach a non-slip backing.
- Ensure that carpets are firmly attached to the stairs.
- Do not stand on a chair to reach things. Store frequently used objects where you can reach them easily.

Keep a Well Lit Home

- Have a lamp or light switch that you can easily reach without getting out of bed.
- Use night lights in the bedroom, bathroom and hallways.
- Keep a flashlight handy.
- Have light switches at both ends of stairs and halls. Install handrails on both sides of stairs.
- Turn on the lights when you enter the house at night.

Bathroom Tips

- Add grab bars in shower, tub and toilet areas.
- Use nonslip adhesive strips or a mat in the shower or tub.
- Consider sitting on a bench or stool in the shower.
- Consider using an elevated toilet seat.

User Care When Walking

- Use helping devices, such as canes as directed by your healthcare provider.
- Wear nonslip, low-heeled shoes or slippers that fit snugly. Avoid walking around in stocking feet.

And don't forget...

- Review medications with your doctor or pharmacist. Some drugs (including over the counter) can make you drowsy, dizzy and unsteady.
- Discuss safe amounts of alcohol intake with your physician.
- Have your hearing and eyesight tested. Inner ear problems can affect balance. Vision problems make it difficult to see potential hazards.
- Exercise regularly to improve muscle flexibility, strength, and balance. Talk to your healthcare professional about exercise programs that are right for you.
- If you feel dizzy or light headed, sit down or stay seated until your head clears. Stand up slowly to avoid unsteadiness.