

Catch Yourself

Simple Steps to Prevent Falls

Your risk of falling **increases** when you have:

- fallen before
- balance problems
- chronic diseases like arthritis
- depression
- hazards in the home
- a lot of medications
- memory problems
- muscle weakness
- problems walking
- vision problems

Reduce your risk of falling and stay independent, healthy, and strong by following the steps below:

1. Get a fall risk assessment

- Talk with your doctor about your fall risk, especially if you have any of the conditions listed above.

2. Review your medications

- Bring all your medications, vitamins, and supplements to your pharmacist or health professional at least once a year and when there are changes in your health.
- Ask about side effects and interactions, especially if you take 4 or more medications.

3. Have your vision checked

- Have your vision and eyeglass prescriptions checked every year by an eye doctor.

4. Engage in regular physical activity

- Ask your doctor about the best types of activities for you and make a plan that fits with what you like and what you are able to do.
- Doing strength and balance exercises using your lower body can build your strength, improve your balance and coordination, and reduce your risk of falling.

5. Assess your home and make changes for safety

- Use a home safety checklist or talk with a professional (such as an occupational therapist) to look for things inside your home that make you more likely to fall.
- Change your home to make it safer - reduce clutter; improve lighting in rooms, hallways, and stairwells; and install handrails and grab bars.

