

Speak Up™ To Prevent Falls



Take care of your health

- Exercise regularly. It builds strength and some exercises can improve your balance.
- Prevent dehydration. It can affect your balance.
- Have your vision checked.
- If your medicine leaves you drowsy, dizzy, weak or confused, tell your doctor. Ask how to reduce these side effects or if you can take another medicine.



Take extra precautions

- Turn on the lights when you enter a room. Do not walk in the dark.
- Make sure your pathway is clear.
- Use the handrails on staircases.
- Sit in chairs that do not move and have arm rests to help you sit down and stand up.
- Wear shoes that have firm, flat, non-slip soles.
- Do not wear shoes that do not have backs on them.
- Replace the rubber tips on canes and walkers when they become worn.



Make small changes to your home

- Install timers, “clap-on” or motion sensors on your lights.
- Declutter regular pathways, such as to the bathroom and in poorly lit areas.
- Use night lights in your bedroom, bathroom and the hallway.
- Remove rugs that can slip. Rubber mats are a good replacement.
- Put frequently used items in easy-to-reach places that do not require using a step stool.
- Make sure it is easy to get in and out of your bed.
- Apply non-slip treads on stairs.
- Apply decals or waterproof, non-slip mats in the bathtub and shower.
- Install grab bars near the toilet and the bathtub or shower.
- A home care agency, personal care and support agency, or community program may be able to help make changes to your home if you live alone and need help.



Ask for help in the hospital or nursing home

- Always use your call button to ask for help getting out of bed. It’s for your safety. You may be weaker than you realize.
- Pay attention to what your doctors or nurses tell you about your risk of falling. A fall can mean a longer hospital stay. Also, injuries from a fall can affect your health for the rest of your life.
- Tell your doctor or nurse if your medicine makes you sleepy, light-headed, dizzy, sluggish, unbalanced or confused.
- Do not feel embarrassed asking for help going to the toilet. You will need extra help until you get stronger.
- Wear non-slip socks or footwear.
- Lower the height of the bed and the side rails.

The goal of Speak Up™ is to help patients and their advocates become active in their care.

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