

# Tips to Avoid Falls

When you say “YES” to these questions, falls become less likely.

## Do I exercise regularly?

Yes  No

Regular, moderate physical activity increases your muscle strength and balance. Your provider can provide an exercise program that's right for you.

## Do I follow a sensible, balanced diet?

Yes  No

Good nutrition results in higher energy. And for stronger bones, remember to include calcium and vitamin D if approved by your doctor.

## Have I done a home safety inspection?

Yes  No

Eliminate obvious hazards (such as poor lighting, throw rugs and clutter). Add safety modifications (such as grab bars, nonslip mats and night lights).

## Do I take extra care?

Yes  No

Take your time and think ahead, especially in new or unfamiliar places. When you rise from your chair, stand for a few seconds before walking.

## Do I wear the right shoes?

Yes  No

Select sturdy, low-heeled shoes with rubber soles for traction. Make sure they are fitted properly

## Has my healthcare provider reviewed my medications?

Yes  No

Be sure to report all medications you are taking, both prescription and over-the-counter, so that your provider can assess the benefits and risks of each drug.

## Have I discussed my fears with my healthcare provider?

Yes  No

Tell your doctor if you've experienced a fall or if you're having dizziness, balance problems or impaired vision. Balance classes, physical therapy or occupational therapy may be recommended to help you walk more safely and to get up correctly if you do fall.

## Do I have a medical alert service?

Yes  No

Knowing that prompt help is available can give you the confidence to be as active as possible.

## Common conditions in older adults increase the risk of falls

**Heart disease, stroke, Parkinson's and low blood pressure** can cause dizziness, balance problems and fatigue.

**Diabetes** can cause a loss of sensation in the feet, leading to a reduced “sense of place.”

**Arthritis** results in loss of flexibility and increased difficulty maintaining balance.

**Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and heart failure** result in breathing difficulties, weakness and fatigue, even with only slight exertion.

**Vision problems**, such as glaucoma and cataracts, decrease visual function.

**Medications** can also be a risk factor, particularly sleeping medications, anti-depressant or anti-anxiety drugs, and heart medications.

# Interior Health Lifeline Program

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