

What you can do to prevent falls

Resources to help
you stay safe and
independent in
your home



You are receiving this brochure because you fell today. We are concerned that you could fall again and that your next fall could be more serious and affect your health and independence.

Falls cause many injuries, including torn muscles, broken bones and even accidental death. Please review this information and follow the recommended steps to reduce your risk for another fall.

Four things you can do to prevent falls

1 Begin a regular exercise program

Exercise is one of the most important ways to lower your chances of falling. It makes you stronger and helps you feel better. Exercises that improve your balance and coordination, like walking, yoga or Tai Chi, are the most helpful.

Lack of exercise leads to weakness and increases your chance of falling. Ask your doctor or health care provider about the best type of exercise program for you.

2 Have your health care provider review your medicines

Talk with your doctor or pharmacist about all the medication you take, even over-the-counter medicines. As you get older, the way medicines work in your body can change. Some medicines — or combinations of medicines — can make you sleepy or dizzy and cause you to fall.

3 Have your vision checked

It is important to have your eyes checked by an eye doctor at least once a year. You may be wearing the wrong prescription or have a condition like glaucoma or cataracts that limit your vision. Poor vision can increase your chances of falling.

Authorization to Release Health Information

I hereby authorize _____ (organization name) to release the information contained on this form to the Aging and Disability Resource Center and my primary care provider indicated below. I authorize this disclosure for the purpose of coordinating my care. This authorization is effective for one month from the date of signature.

A photocopy of this authorization shall be considered as valid as the original. I understand that I may receive a copy of the signed authorization by request to the emergency services organization outlined above. Information used or disclosed pursuant to this authorization may be subject to re-disclosure by the recipient and may no longer be protected by federal privacy rules.

Patient Full Name _____

Birth Date _____

Phone Number _____

Address _____

Preferred ADRC _____

Primary Care Provider/Organization _____

Patient Signature _____

Date _____

Relationship to patient (if not patient) _____

Send copy of authorization to patient.

Fall Information

Date _____ Time _____ Location _____

Cause of fall _____

Injuries sustained _____

Second or subsequent fall-related EMS visit

Referrals:

_____ (to whom) _____ (date/time) _____ (by whom)

_____ (to whom) _____ (date/time) _____ (by whom)

4 Make your home safer

About half of all falls happen at home. Follow these tips to make your home safer:

- Remove things you can trip over (like throw rugs, papers, books, clothes and shoes) from stairs and places where you walk.
- Keep items you use often in cabinets you can reach easily without a step stool.
- Have grab bars installed next to your toilet and in the tub or shower.
- Use non-slip mats in the bathtub and on shower floors.
- Improve lighting in your home. As you get older, you need brighter lights to see well. Hang light-weight curtains or shades to reduce glare.
- Have handrails and lights installed on all staircases.
- Wear proper-fitting shoes inside and outside the house. Avoid going barefoot or wearing slippers.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Four things you should do because you fell

1 Talk with your doctor

The No. 1 risk factor for a future fall is a previous fall. To keep you safe and independent, your doctor will be able to evaluate your risk for another fall and recommend treatment options, such as physical therapy or medication changes. *(Call your doctor if you take blood thinning medications such as Coumadin, aspirin or Plavix. These medications increase your risk of complications related to falling.)*

2 Keep a fall diary

Recording information about all falls is a good way to discover patterns or areas of concern.

Share this information with your health care provider.

When did you fall, lose your balance or nearly fall? <i>(date and time of day if you know it)</i>	Did you hit the ground, floor or wall? <i>Did you hit furniture or anything else when you fell?</i>

3 Call your local Aging and Disability Resource Center

Your local Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) is a welcoming, convenient place for you and your family to get information and the resources you need. Services can be provided over the telephone, at the ADRC office or in your home. Most programs are free of charge.

Many ADRC centers offer fall prevention classes, in-home assessments and adaptive equipment to help you stay independent in your home. Call your local ADRC for details.

What caused the fall?	Were you able to get up by yourself?	Were you injured?

4 Call your local senior center

Senior centers are places for older adults to receive services and develop skills to promote emotional, physical and social well-being and independence. Many senior centers offer exercise classes, social activities, continuing education and more. Call your local senior center for more information.