

Preventing a Falls

It takes only a few seconds for a fall to happen. For an older person, a fall can be serious. It may take months or even years for them to recover.

Tips for Preventing Falls

If you know an elderly person or live with one, please share the following safety tips with them:

- **Indoor Lighting** - Increase lighting in the stairways and hallways. Having a night light is very useful.
- **Clutter, extension cords, and scatter rugs** - Keep areas where you walk clear of objects, floor rugs, and cords.
- **Handrails** – Put in handrails and grab bars wherever they are needed. Towel holders should not be used as a grab bar or handrail. They were not made to hold the weight of a person.
- **Pets** – Keep watchful eye for your pet. A pet can get under your feet and cause a fall.
- **Stairs and uneven ground** - Replace rotting stairs and steps. Be sure to avoid uneven ground or areas under construction.
- **Outdoor lighting** - Use all outdoor lights. Sensor lights will turn on whenever there is movement.
- **Walkers, canes, and wheelchairs** - use canes and walkers to help with balance. Remember to put the brakes on the wheel chair before getting out of it.
- **Changes in Body** - Elders should have regular eye exams and wear their glasses. Regular exercise can build muscle strength and flexibility. It also improves balance and sleep. Hearing aides can help older people with hearing problems.
- **Chronic health conditions** - High blood pressure and heart problems can cause dizziness. This can lead to falls. Elders should get up slowly when sitting or lying down.
- **Medications** - Prescription medications and over the counter medications can cause side effects. Some of the side effects are dizziness or drowsiness. Make sure you show your doctor or other doctors all your medications.

Remember, it is ok to ask for help if you need it!