

# Simple Tips to Prevent Falls

Falls are a leading cause of injury and death, especially among men. Age increases risk for everyone. These six simple tips can keep you safer:

## 1. Talk with your doctor

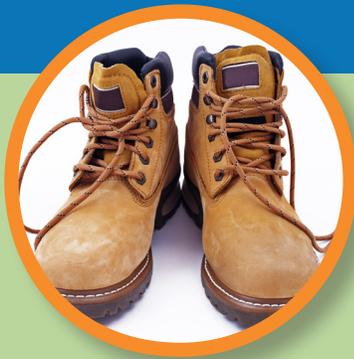
- Review prescription and over-the-counter medications. Discuss possible drug interactions or side effects that can increase your fall risk
- Tell your doctor about past falls and near falls — when they happened and under what circumstances
- Consider other health conditions — eye and ear disorders, dizziness, joint pain, numbness and shortness of breath can contribute to falls

## 2. Keep moving

Gentle exercise reduces your risk of falling. With your doctor's permission, consider activities such as walking, water workouts or tai chi (a gentle exercise that involves slow and graceful dance-like movements).



## 3. Wear sensible shoes



Properly fitting shoes with sturdy, nonskid soles are best. Ill-fitting shoes can cause a loss of balance and contribute to poor gait. Avoid wearing flip-flops as a primary source of footwear. Flip-flops are trickier to walk in. They increase the risk of tripping and falling.

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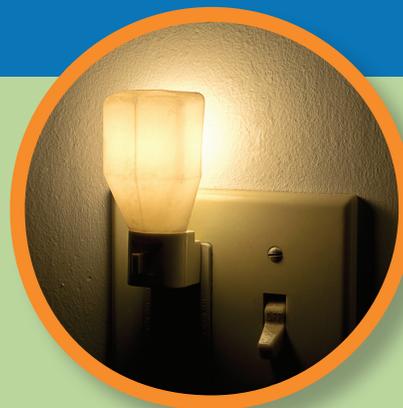
## 4. Remove tripping hazards



Take a good look around your home and remove any trip hazards. Remove boxes, cables and clutter from walkways and garages. Secure loose rugs and carpets. Immediately clean up spills. Use nonslip mats in your shower and bathtub.

## 5. Light up your living space

Use night lights. Turn on lights before using stairs. Store flashlights in easy-to-find places.



## 6. Give yourself a hand



Use handrails on both sides of stairs when going up and down, and make sure staircases are properly lit. According to the Census Bureau, stairs are a common source of injury among all ages, and the frequency and rate of stair-related injuries are increasing. The direct and indirect costs of nonfatal stair injuries total about \$92 billion annually