

10 Tips to Prevent Falls



1. **Talk to Your Health Care Provider.** Ask for a falls risk assessment and share your history of falls. It's also important to express any concerns you may have about falling.
2. **Get Your Vision Checked.** As we age, so do our eyes. Get your vision checked annually to keep your eyesight as best as it can be.
3. **Get Your Hearing Checked.** Our ears play an important role in helping us maintain our balance. Having your hearing checked can help prevent falls.
4. **Get Your Feet Checked.** Having your feet checked by a podiatrist or your healthcare provider once a year can decrease your falls risk. Also discuss proper footwear to ensure your safety.
5. **Review Medications with Your Doctor or Pharmacist.** Make sure any side effects don't increase your risk of falling. It's also important to make sure medications aren't interacting with each other to increase your fall risk. Always take medications as prescribed and do not stop taking a medication without consulting your doctor first.
6. **Keep Your Home Safe.** Most falls occur in the home. Be sure to remove all tripping hazards, increase lighting throughout the home and in all walkways, and install handrails or grab bars where needed. Using a Home Safety Checklist may be helpful!
7. **Take Extra Precautions During Extreme Weather or Unfamiliar Environments.** Extreme weather or unfamiliar places can increase your fall risk. Be aware of your surroundings and use caution while walking. If possible, try to avoid going out in extreme weather conditions.
8. **Use Assistive Devices As Needed.** If you were told by your healthcare provider to use an assistive device, do so. If you feel unsteady on your feet but do not have an assistive device, using one can be helpful! Always make sure that the device you're using is adjusted to fit you properly. Do not use anyone else's, as it is not adjusted for your needs.
9. **Talk to Your Family Members or Friends.** You are not alone! If you have concerns about falling, talk to your family and friends for support. Discuss ways that you can all work together to ensure your safety and make you comfortable while living your everyday life.
10. **Find an Exercise or Balance Program.** Participating in exercises that improve balance, flexibility, and strength can lower your risk of falling. This may also allow you to move about with more confidence. You can contact your local Area Agency on Aging toll-free at 1-877-222-3737, or visit www.aging.nj.gov to find health promotion programs to keep you active. Exercise with a friend to keep motivated!

