

## Falls And Older People

### **What causes falls**

As you grow older, changes in your body such as vision problems, stiffening joints and weakened muscles which can increase your chances of falling.

Falls can be a sign of a new health problem, medication side effects, strength or balance problems.

### **Hazards**

- ◆ Poor footwear
- ◆ Pets
- ◆ Unnecessary clutter around the home
- ◆ Differing flooring surfaces (steps, rugs on the floor, slippery tiles)
- ◆ Inadequate lighting



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### **How to reduce the risk of falls**

The likelihood of a fall increases because of the natural changes that happen as our bodies age but this does not mean falls for everyone are not preventable

Care, caution, a focus on general fitness and regular activity is just one simple way to guard against loss of balance.

- ◆ Eat healthy and maintain a healthy and active lifestyle. Ensure you have a diverse and nutritious diet.
- ◆ Visit your doctor for regular check-ups and maintain medical conditions.
- ◆ Take medication only as prescribed.
- ◆ Wear comfortable, firm-fitting and rubber soled footwear.
- ◆ Remove clutter and ensure adequate lighting around the home, ensuring you can see possible hazards or obstructions.



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### **Who can help with falls**

If you've had a fall, or you often feel like you're at risk of falling, talking about your experience is important.

### **Local Doctor**

Make sure you tell your doctor about your fall, any conditions you have and medicines you're taking. A doctor may refer you to a specialist health professional.

### **Friends and Family**

If you live independently it may be a good idea to arrange regular contact with a friend or family to assure them you are safe and sound. This can allow you to keep in contact but also keep informed on the health and safety of friends and family that also live alone.



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