

FALL AWARENESS AND PREVENTION

Falls are the leading cause of injuries among adults 65 and older. Each year thousands of older Americans experience a fall that can result in a serious injury, disability or even death; however, most accidents in the home can be prevented by eliminating hazards. If you have fallen in the past year, feel unsteady when walking or standing or worry about falling, notify your provider immediately, as you may be at risk for a fall.

The following are some simple safety tips that will help ensure a safe living environment:

Personal Care

- Wear shoes that have good support and non-slip soles. Avoid wearing slippers.
- Get up slowly after you sit or lie down.
- Think about wearing an alarm device that will bring help in case you fall and can't get up (especially if you live alone).
- Have your vision checked at least once a year by an eye doctor.
- Have your nurse, provider or pharmacist review your prescriptions as some medications may make you sleepy or dizzy.

Household

- Remove or move things that you can trip over from floors, stairs and walkways (papers, books, shoes, clothing, etc.).
- Improve the lighting in your home. Replace burned out bulbs.
- Remove small throw rugs or use double edge tape to keep rugs securely in place.
- Make sure carpet is firmly attached at all edges.
- Keep all electric cords and phone cords coiled, close to wall and away from walking areas.
- Clean up spills immediately.
- Use a sturdy step stool with a hand bar. Never use a chair to reach top cupboards.
- Be aware of where your pets are at all times.

Wound care is essential: Taking care of your wound is taking care of your health. To refer a patient or schedule an appointment, call:

Stairs and Steps (Indoors and Outdoors)

- Make certain stairways, halls, entrances and outside steps are well-lit.
- Place handrails on both sides of the stairs.
- Keep objects off the stairs.
- Keep outside walks clear of snow and ice in the winter.
- Make sure carpets or rubber treads are firmly attached to every step.

Bathroom

- Place night lights in bathroom and hallways for at night.
- Install grab bars next to your toilet and in the tub or shower.
- Use non-slip mats in the bathtub or shower.
- Use an elevated toilet seat or shower stool, if needed.

Bedroom

- Place a lamp, flashlight and extra batteries within easy reach of your bed.
- Make sure the path from your bed to the bathroom is lit.