



# Act to Prevent Falls at Home



## Did You Know?

- Falls are **not** a normal part of aging: they are predictable and preventable
- Your home, furnishings and lifestyle all affect your risk of falling
- Removing hazards can reduce the risk of falling and help you stay independent!

# What can I do to reduce my fall risk at home?

## Get involved in local programs

**Stay On Your Feet** program provides tools for healthy active older adults, focused on staying active and independent

Go online to [www.stayonyourfeet.ca](http://www.stayonyourfeet.ca)

**Stand Up! Exercise classes:** for older adults living independently

Call Algoma Public Health: 705-942-4646 or 1-866-892-0172

## Manage your health

- Have yearly vision tests
- See your doctor at least once a year for a check
- Let your doctor know if you have a fall

## Eat a variety of healthy foods

Eating well is important to maintain muscle and bone strength. Poor diet can lead to weakness and fatigue, increasing your risk of falls. We recommend:

- Eating plenty of fruits and vegetables
- Including protein foods like eggs, meat/poultry, fish, tofu, nuts and seeds at each meal or snack
- Making water or milk your drink of choice (avoid dehydration)
- Including sources of calcium and vitamin D for bone health

## **Manage your medications**

- Learn how your medications may affect you (side effects)
- Keep an up-to-date medication record with you
- Review all medications with your pharmacist or health care provider (include herbal, vitamins and over-the-counter medicines)
- Alcohol can change the way medications work in your body; even without the effect of medication, alcohol can increase your risk of having a fall

## **Wear proper clothing and footwear**

- Wear clothes that fit well, do not drag, are easy to take on/off and have simple closures
- Wear a supportive shoe with slip-resistant tread

## **Engage in regular physical activity**

- 150 minutes a week
- Strength and balance exercises 2 hours a week

## **Manage hazards around your home**

- Ask your occupational therapist about assistive devices such as grab bars and raised toilet seats to lessen your risk for falls
- Do not rush on stairs; ensure handrails are secure, steps are in good condition, your path is well lit and clutter is removed
- Avoid walking on ice; if there is no other path, walk slow, take small steps and point toes outward. Spread de-icing salt or sand on icy walkways.

## If you fall and are not injured:

### Try not to panic, rest a moment

If you can, **get up**

- 1) Roll onto your side, push up into a sitting position
- 2) Turn onto your hands and knees, crawl to the nearest stable furniture
- 3) Place your hands on the seat
- 4) Place one foot flat on the floor
- 5) Lean forward and push up with your other foot
- 6) Sit then tell someone you have fallen



## If you fall and are injured:

### Try not to panic, rest a moment

If you are injured **do not get up**

**Get help** - drag yourself to a phone. Call 9-1-1 and stay on the line.

**Keep warm** - use anything that is near: bedding, a coat, even a tablecloth

**If you are wet** - if your bladder lets go during the fall, move away from the wet area

**Move your limbs** - move your arms and legs to help circulation and reduce pressure areas

### Be prepared:

- Practice getting up before a fall occurs
- Activate your personal alarm call system
- Keep your phone at table level
- Find a daily call buddy

## Prevent falls before they happen!

Complete the **Home Safety Checklist** at: [preventfalls.ca/older-adults/home-safety-checklist/](https://preventfalls.ca/older-adults/home-safety-checklist/)