

Fall Prevention

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A fall is “An unexpected event in which an individual comes to rest on the ground, floor, or lower level” (World Health Organization)

About 30% of people over the age of 65 fall each year.
Most falls occur while walking or standing from a loss of balance.

Common risk factors for falls

- Health conditions: arthritis, diabetes, heart disease, COPD, depression, dementia, stroke, Parkinson's Disease, frailty, incontinence
- Sensory: Vision and hearing loss, peripheral neuropathy, dizziness, vertigo
- Physical: Problems with balance and walking, muscle weakness
- Other: Age, female gender, fear of falling, history of falls

3 key questions to assess your risk:

1. Have you fallen in the past year?
2. Do you feel unsteady when standing or walking?
3. Do you have worries about falling?



What you can do to prevent falls



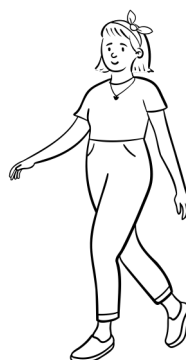
Exercise to improve your balance and strength – balance, functional strength, tai chi



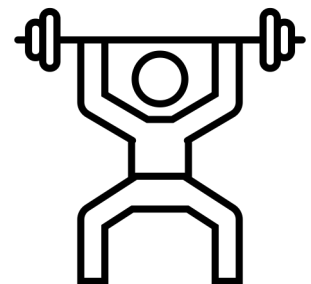
Sit-to-stands



Standing balance



Walking tasks:
Sideways, backwards,
figure of 8



Functional strength:
squats & heel raises

What you can do to prevent falls



Make your environment safer



Remove tripping hazards
Install bars & non-slip mats
Improve lighting



Wear shoes with firm soles
Take your time in icy weather
Use handrails
Be mindful of curbs, steps, ramps



Ask a healthcare provider to review your medications

- Many older adults are prescribed multiple medications
- Some medications or combinations of medication can make you sleepy, dizzy or affect your vision and sense of balance
- **Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review all your medications, even over-the-counter ones**
- Tools are available for your physician to help deprescribe medications if you feel you might be on too many (e.g., Start-Stopp)



Have your eyes and feet checked

- Visual acuity, contrast, and depth perception all decrease with age
- We may also lose sensory perception in our limbs and feet with aging and health conditions
- Poor vision and decreased sensation in your feet can increase your risk of falling
 - ✓ Once a year, go for an eye check to update your eyeglasses, and check for conditions like cataracts and glaucoma
 - ✓ Ask your doctor or health care provider to check your feet once a year

Resources:

Eye Exams: People aged 65 and over are eligible for an eye examination once every 18 months.

Government-funded Physiotherapy: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/physiotherapy-clinics-ohip-funded>

- St. George Physiotherapy Clinic, 180 Bloor Street West, 416-921-4587, info@stgeorgephysio.ca
- Physical Therapy Services, 484 Church Street, 416-923-8577, ptservicestoronto@gmail.com

Foot Care Clinics

- Regent Park Community Health Centre, 465 Dundas Street East, 416-364-2261, info@regentparkchc.org; <https://regentparkchc.org/program/chiropractic-foot-care/>
- Fontbonne Ministries – Mustard Seed, 791 Queen Street East, 416-465-6069, admin@fontbonneministries.ca; <https://fontbonneministries.ca/mustard-seed/>

Fall Prevention Programs

- Together in Movement and Exercise (TIME™), 349 Ontario Street, Paul Hundert, 416-925-4363 ext. 2525, paul.hundert@tngcs.org; TIME@uhn.ca