

# Prevent falls by making a few easy changes to your living environment

Did you know that falls are the leading cause of serious injuries for older adults?

There are many steps you can take to avoid a fall. Along with doing exercises to improve your balance (see page 6), follow this room-by-room guide for tips on how to make your home safer. Just a few changes can make a big difference.

## Bathroom

- Hand-held shower nozzle and easy-to-use faucets
- Toilet seat at least 24 inches high
- Bath or shower chair if needed
- Non-slip mat or strips on the shower or tub floor

## Living room

- Curtains off the floor
- Easy to open window
- A place for TV controls that's easy to find
- Firm seating that's not too deep
- Pathways clear of obstacles
- Low-pile carpet on floors
- Throw rugs removed

## Kitchen

- Frequently used items in easy reach
- Rotating tray (i.e. a Lazy Susan) in corner and other cabinets so stored items are accessible
- Non-skid floor



## Bedroom

- No clutter, including clothing and shoes, on the floor
- Sheets and blankets that don't pool on the floor
- Light, telephone, and flashlight within easy reach of bed

## Stairways

- Light switches easy to reach
- Lighting added to dim corners
- No clutter on stairs
- Steps evenly spaced
- Rubber treads on stairs with no carpet

## What you wear makes a difference too

Your shoes should fit well and have non-skid soles. Slippers should be snug. And clothing—such as nightgowns—shouldn't drag on the floor and become a tripping hazard. If you are unsteady on your feet, consider using a walking aid such as a cane or walker.



Non-slip steps with reflecting tape on the edges

WELCOME

Walkways and driveways kept clear of debris, ice, and snow

## Outside

- Handrails next to stairways
- Walking surfaces clear of moss or other slippery materials