

Falls

There are different causes of falls. Factors that contribute to falls include limb weakness, numbness in the feet, limb spasticity, incoordination, and gait abnormalities due to causes such as post stroke sequela, various neuromuscular and neurological conditions, and mechanical causes (e.g scoliosis, feet problems).

Home Setup

Have a bed that is low, so that your feet touch the floor when you sit on the edge of the bed.

Keep tripping hazards out of your home.

- Remove loose wires or cords from areas you walk through to get from one room to another.
- Remove loose throw rugs.
- Do not keep small pets in your home.
- Fix any uneven flooring in doorways.

Have good lighting. Put hand rails in the bathtub or shower and next to the toilet. Place a slip-proof mat in the bathtub or shower.

Re-organize the home so things are easier to reach. Keep a portable phone with you so you have it when you need it make or receive calls.

Set up your home so that you do not have to climb steps. Some tips are:

- Put your bed or bedroom on the first floor.
- Have a bathroom or a portable commode on the same floor where you spend most of your day.

Home Care

Weak muscles that make it more difficult to stand up or keep your balance are a common cause of falls. Balance problems can also cause falls.

When you walk, avoid sudden movements or changes in your position. Wear shoes with low heels that fit well. Rubber soles will help keep you from slipping. Stay away from water or ice on sidewalks.

Do not stand on stepladders or chairs to reach things.

Ask your health care provider about medicines you may be taking that can make you dizzy. Your doctor may be able to make some medication changes that could reduce falls.

Ask your health care provider about a cane or walker. If you use a walker, attach a small basket to it to keep a phone and other important items in.

Exercise to Help Build Your Strength

When you stand up from a sitting position, go slowly. Hold on to something. If you are having problems getting up, ask your health care provider about seeing a physical therapist. The therapist can show you how to build your strength to make getting up easier.