

Alzheimer's Foundation of America

 alzfdn.org/falls-prevention/

The risk of falls increases with age and can be a serious problem affecting older individuals. This may be due to a range of factors including medical conditions, medication, balance difficulties, visual-cognitive impairment, and environmental factors. Falls can cause serious injury, and loss of independence.

Following are some tips to help reduce the risk of falls:

- Make sure that all pathways inside and outside of the house are clear of clutter and other obstacles, such as snow in the winter
- Install handrails in stairways and ensure they are securely anchored
- Secure or remove all area rugs
- Ensure that cords are neatly kept or tucked behind furniture and not strewn across the floor
- Clearly mark all rooms with signs, to avoid wandering and confusion
- Keep everyday items, such as food or personal care products, within reach
- Utilize nightlights throughout the house
- Minimize glare from windows and mirrors
- Some medications can cause dizziness that can lead to falls. Ask the individual's doctor or a pharmacist about prescription and non-prescription medication side effects.
- Ensure the individual wears eyeglasses and hearing devices, if needed, as sensory issues can contribute to falls
- Consult with a physical therapist about assistive devices (e.g., walker)
- Evaluate the feet for pain and ensure the individual wears comfortable, well-fit shoes with non-skid soles

Consult with a physician about appropriate diet and exercise. A healthy diet can help build bone strength. Strengthening exercises, such as chair rises and tai chi, may help strengthen leg muscles and improve balance.