

Prevention is the Best Way to Avoid Falls

Why is it Important to Prevent Falls?



Falls should not be considered a “normal” part of aging. Yet each year **one out of four older adults reports a fall**. This about 36 million falls of which **8 million require medical attention** for injuries ranging from bruises to fractured hips and head injuries. Approximately **32,000 older adults die each year from falls**.

What Can I do for Myself to Prevent Falls?

- 1** Tell your doctor right away if you fall, are worried about falling or begin to feel unsteady so he or she can rule out the onset of a new disease as the cause.
- 2** Studies show that **improving your balance** and strength through exercise significantly **decreases the risk of falling**. Also, the right exercise program can delay mental decline by up to 10 years. Ask your doctor about the **best type of exercise program for you.***
- 3** Difficulty seeing can lead to serious falls. Having **your eyes checked annually** as you age is an easy fall prevention measure.
- 4** Wearing **properly fitting shoes** with non-skid soles can provide you with the proper support to **prevent slips and stumbles**.
- 5** As you get older the way medications work your body can change. So, medications that you tolerated well in the past may start to cause dizziness, light headedness, drowsiness or loss of balance. Periodic review of your medications, including over the counter medications, with your doctor or pharmacist can go a long way in preventing falls.

***Hint:** Yoga or Tai Chi are great ways to **keep active and improve your strength and balance**, there are lots of free classes for beginners available online or check in your local community.

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Half of all falls occur at home because of clutter, poor lighting or loose rugs. There are a number of things you can do to prevent falls at home.



Remove things **you can trip over** (like papers, books, clothes, shoes) from places where you walk and stairs.



Remove **small throw rugs** or use double sided tape to hold them down.



Do not put items you frequently use in high cabinets that require the use of a stool or step ladder to reach them.



Use **non-slip mats** in bathtubs and on shower floors.



Install grab bars in bathtubs or showers and next to toilets.



As you get older you need better lighting to see well, so **improve the lighting in your home**. Have lights and handrails installed on all stairs.

For More Information on Avoiding Falls Visit:
www.cdc.gov/steady

PHP Care Complete FIDA-IDD (Medicare - Medicaid Plan)

The State of New York has created a Participant Ombudsman Program called the Independent Consumer Advocacy Network (ICAN) to provide participants free, confidential assistance on any services offered by Partners Health Plan. ICAN may be reached toll-free at 1-844-614-8800 (TTY users call 711, then follow the prompts to dial 844-614-8800) or online at icannys.org.

Partners Health Plan is a managed care plan that contracts with Medicare and the New York State Department of Health (Medicaid) to provide benefits to Participants through the Fully Integrated Duals Advantage for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (FIDA-IDD) Demonstration.