

# HEAD AND SPINE INJURY PREVENTION

Preventing Falls in the Home!!


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**FALLS ARE THE  
LEADING CAUSE OF  
INJURY TO OLDER  
PEOPLE**

**Fall Prevention  
starts in the  
home!!**

## **FALLS ARE NORMALLY A SIGN THAT SOMETHING IS WRONG**

- ❖ **Increasing weakness resulting in falls can be a sign of:**
    - ❖ **UTI**
    - ❖ **ILLNESS**
    - ❖ **STROKE**
    - ❖ **HEART ATTACK**
    - ❖ **LOW BLOOD PRESSURE**
    - ❖ **DEHYDRATION**
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## RISK FACTORS FOR FALLS

- ❖ REACTIONS TO CERTAIN MEDICATIONS.
  - ❖ POOR BALANCE OR WEAK MUSCLES.
  - ❖ TAKING SEVERAL DIFFERENT TYPES OF MEDICATIONS.
  - ❖ HAVING DEMENTIA OR MEMORY PROBLEMS.
  - ❖ HAVING BOWEL OR BLADDER FREQUENCY OR URGENCY.
  - ❖ HAVING VISION AND/OR HEARING PROBLEMS
  - ❖ DRINKING TOO MUCH ALCOHOL.
  - ❖ PROBLEMS WITH FEET INCLUDING; LOSS OF FEELING, ULCERS, CORNS, AND CALLUSES.
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## PREVENTING FALLS IN THE HOME

- ❖ REMOVE CLUTTER ESPECIALLY ON STAIRCASES.
- ❖ MAKE SURE CARPETS ARE NOT FRAYED OR LOOSE.
- ❖ MAKE SURE AREA CARPETS DO NOT SLIDE ON HARD FLOORS.
- ❖ WEAR NON-SKID FOOTWEAR WHEN IN THE HOUSE.
- ❖ WEAR PROPER FITTING FOOTWEAR.
- ❖ LIMIT ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION.
- ❖ USE NONSLIP MATS ON BATHROOM FLOORS AND IN SHOWERS AND BATHTUBS.
- ❖ USE NIGHT LIGHTS AND BEDSIDE LAMPS TO ENSURE ADEQUATE LIGHTING FOR NIGHT TIME BATHROOM TRIPS.

## HEALTH PREVENTION

- ❖ **SEE YOUR DOCTOR REGULARLY.**
- ❖ **REVIEW EACH PRESCRIPTION EVERYTIME YOU GET NEW MEDICATION.**
- ❖ **REPORT ANY MUSCLE WEAKNESS, DIZZINESS, OR NUMBNESS TO YOUR DOCTOR.**
- ❖ **TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT GENTLE EXERCISE PROGRAMS FOR YOU.**
- ❖ **USE ALL ASSISTIVE DEVICES THAT HAVE BEEN PRESCRIBED TO YOU.**
- ❖ **ASK YOUR DOCTOR FOR REFERRAL TO PHYSICAL OR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY AS NEEDED.**
- ❖ **REPORT ANY CHANGES IN YOUR HEALTH TO YOUR DOCTOR.**

## WHAT DO YOU DO IF YOU FALL?

- ❖ **IF YOU FALL AND ARE EXPERIENCING PAIN SEEK MEDICAL TREATMENT.**
  - ❖ **IF YOU FALL, HIT YOUR HEAD, AND ARE TAKING BLOOD THINNERS, SEEK MEDICAL TREATMENT IMMEDIATELY.**
  - ❖ **IF YOU LIVE ALONE, GET INFORMATION ON HOME MONITORING EQUIPMENT SO THAT YOU CAN CALL FOR HELP IN THE EVENT OF A FALL.**
  - ❖ **ALWAYS REPORT ALL FALLS TO YOUR DOCTOR.**
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