



Safety, Health, Injury Prevention

# How to Reduce Your Risk of Falling

By Dr. Vanessa M. Dazio

## Waking Up

- Rise up slowly from bed so circulation can adjust to position change (prevents dizziness).
- Sit on the edge of the bed for a moment to prevent dizziness.

## Good Eating Habits

- Start every day by eating breakfast.
- Drink plenty of water (at least 8 glasses a day).
- Eat well balanced meals.

## Pets

- Be careful around pets.
- Add a jingle bell to your pet's collar (so pet can be heard wherever they are).

## Balance

- If you are unsteady, had falls or near falls, tell your doctor right away.
- Maintain muscle strength, balance, and flexibility to prevent falls.
- Install safety rails in the bathroom, stairs and hallways for support.

## Bathroom Safety

- Be sure the floor is dry at all times (prevent slips and falls).
- Install safety rails for support.
- Bring a phone into the bathroom in case of emergency.
- If unsteady, use a chair and hand held shower attachment.
- Add non-slip strips or rubber mat to the tub/shower floor to prevent slipperiness and falls.
- Do not turn suddenly (to avoid losing balance).
- Do not lock the bathroom door in case of accident so others could help in an emergency.
- Do not bend or twist (to avoid balance changes).
- Never use a towel rack, soap tray, shelves or other attachments not anchored in the wall.



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## How to Reduce Your Risk of Falling

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### Bedroom Safety

- Organize your closets for a safe and comfortable reach - between shoulders and knees.
- Avoid using slippery fabrics (such as satiny sheets or comforters).
- Install a smoke detector in or near your bedroom.
- Install a night light.
- Keep a telephone within easy reach.
- Never smoke in your bed.

### Check Ups

- Get your eyes checked every year.
- Get a yearly medical preventive check up.
- Ask pharmacist and doctor to review all prescription drugs, over the counter drugs and all vitamins and supplements.
- Check your home for barriers or safety hazards and eliminate them.
- Pain? Tell your doctor. (Pain is a warning!)

### Eliminate Hazards

- Eliminate all obstacles immediately.
- Do not wear clothing that is too long or too loose (to prevent trips and falls).
- Close cabinet drawers right away to avoid injuries.
- Keep your home well lit at all times.
- Place night lights in all walking pathways.

### Telephone

- Keep an easy to reach telephone in the bathroom for safety.
- Use a portable phone when going outside.
- Print emergency telephone numbers in very large font, so they can be read from the floor.
- Make sure a phone could be reached from the floor if a fall happened.
- Never rush to the phone, door or bathroom.