

Fall Prevention

Facts

Falls are the leading cause of death from injury among people 65 or over. Annually, falls are reported by one-third of all people 65 and older and two-thirds of those will fall again within six months.

Risk Factors

Vision: Age-related vision diseases can increase the risk of falling.

Medication: Certain drugs can reduce mental alertness and make you more susceptible to falling.

Balance: Balance gets worse with age and can increase the risk of falling.

Lack of Physical Activity: Without regular exercise, muscle tone, strength, and bone mass will all decrease, contributing to the risk of falling.

Environment: At least one-third of all elderly falls involve environmental hazards in the home, such as loose cords, throw rugs, poor lighting and clutter.

Chronic health conditions lead to a HIGHER risk for falling:

- Heart disease and low blood pressure can cause dizziness and loss of balance.
- Parkinson's disease and arthritis can cause muscle weakness.
- Cataracts, glaucoma, and other vision issues can make it harder to detect slip or trip hazards in the home.



Prevention

Falls are accidents just waiting to happen at any time but there are steps you can take to prevent them. Taking time to scan your home and your medicine cabinet can save you a trip to the hospital. Don't forget - moving your muscles and body will help with mobility and strength too!

In the Home:

- Install hand rails and grab bars in commonly used places such as the shower and the stairs.
- Have a night light in your bedroom and use sheets and blankets that do not reach the floor in order to avoid tripping.
- Store foods used the most on easy to reach shelves.

Medication:

- Get your eyes checked regularly.
- Ask your doctor to review all current medications and know common side effects.
- Throw away out-of-date medications. Dispose of expired medications.
- Schedule your annual wellness visit each year for a full physical.

Exercise:

- Add balance exercises to your physical activity to increase balance, but always hold onto something to prevent falling while performing the exercise.
- Engage regularly in exercise designed to increase muscle and bone strength.
- Walk every day if possible.
- Use the armchair exercises available at www.peninsulahomecare.com.



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Wicomico & Somerset Co. 410-543-7550

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