

Falling Prevention Tips

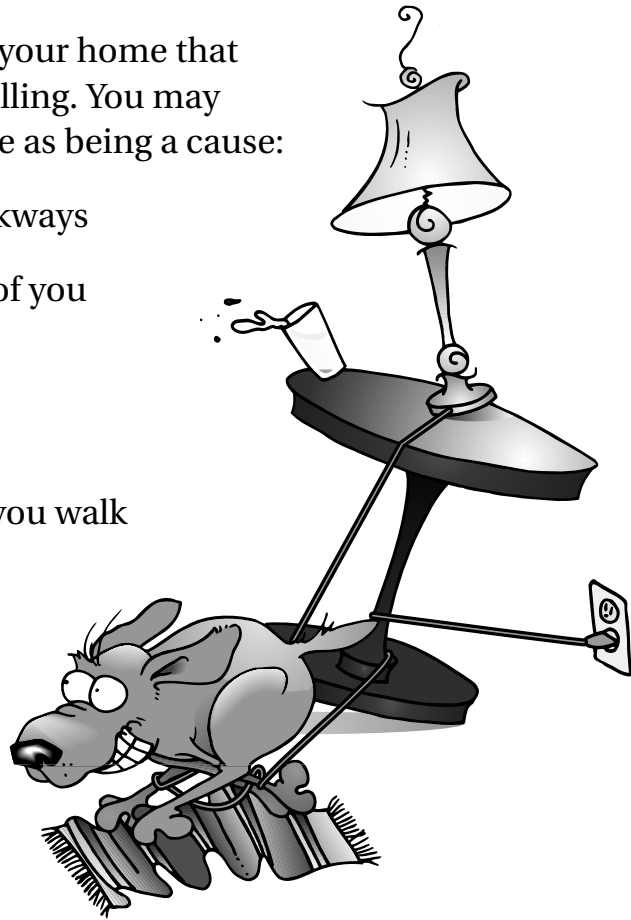
There may be things around your home that might increase your risk of falling. You may not think about some of these as being a cause:

- poorly lit rooms or walkways
- pets that walk in front of you
- slippery or wet floors
- uneven surfaces
- electrical cords where you walk
- clutter in the floor
- throw rugs

To help yourself, look around your house and see if there are things that might put you at risk. Think about your health and physical fitness.

Ask your doctor if any of your medicines could make you clumsy or sleepy. If you have tingling, burning or pain in your legs or feet, tell your doctor. This may be peripheral neuropathy—the loss of feeling due to nerve damage—since about 20% of those over 65 have this condition.

Review the prevention tips. They may help you avoid a fall.



Continued on next page.

Here are some things you can do to reduce your risk of falling:

- Install sturdy rails along any stairs or steps.
- Make sure any throw rug or mat has a non-skid backing to keep it from sliding.
- Install non-skid strips in your tub or shower.

Arrange your furniture so that chairs, tables, footstools or other items are not in the path where you will be walking.

- If you need extra help, hold onto another person's arm while you walk, sit or stand.
- If you need help when you sit or stand, use the arms of the chair to support your weight and push against. (Choose sturdy furniture that is not easily turned over.)
- Use a bath seat when taking a shower.
- Install grab bars in your shower or tub and beside the toilet in your bathroom.
- Steps, entryways and ramps should be well marked and easy for you to see.
- Get your eyesight checked at least once a year.
- Ask your doctor about an exercise plan to improve your strength and balance.
- Make sure all areas of your home are well lit.
- Pay attention to where you are. Look for uneven surfaces, wet floors, clutter or other things that may put you at risk.
- Slow down and take your time.