

WINTER 2016

Can you reduce your risk for falling?

Yes, you can reduce your risk of falling with balance, flexibility and strength training! All three play an important role in improving your mobility and reducing your risk for falls!

Exercises like walking, swimming and t'ai chi, have proven to have a positive impact on increasing balance, strength and flexibility!

Check with your doctor before embarking on any new exercise program.

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Preventing Falls is Important



Did you know 1 in 3 older adults (65 and older) fall each year?

Less than half speak to their health care providers about their fall. Falls can result in injuries such as a hip fracture and/or head injury. In fact, over 95% of hip fractures are caused by falls. A fall can also have more severe results and lead to a fatal injury.

Falls are not part of aging. There are ways to reduce your risk of falls!

Factors That Increase Risk of Falling

According to Dr. Daphne Scott, Assistant Attending Physician, "Common risk factors include past history of a fall, lower body weakness, age, balance problems, arthritis, cognitive impairment, and dizziness." Dr. Scott suggests that adults over the age of 65 have a yearly screening for falls with their health provider. If you are found to be at risk for falls, your provider may order further testing which may include a blood test to determine levels of vitamin D and a bone density scan.

Tips to Prevent Falls

Approximately 55% of falls in older adults occur inside the house. Try these strategies to help prevent a fall:

EXERCISE AND BE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE

Exercise is important because it can help to increase core and lower body strength, improve balance, and increase flexibility. If you are at risk for falls, it is recommended that you do physical therapy and balance exercises at least three times per week. Wearing sturdy shoes with firm soles is important when exercising.

MANAGE YOUR MEDICATIONS

Review your list of medicines with your pharmacist or health care provider to identify any side effects and/or medication interactions that may result in dizziness or loss of balance.

GET AN ANNUAL EYE EXAM

Eye exams are critical as they can reveal when you need to update your prescriptions.

ASSESS YOUR HOME ENVIRONMENT

Review your home and make it safer by:

- clearing pathways and increasing lighting
- securing throw rugs with non-slip rubber backing
- maintaining the floors free of objects that may be tripping hazards
- moving wires and cords so that they are against the wall and not in the walking area
- installing a non-slip rubber mat in your bathtub or shower
- installing shower bars and bathroom handles

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