

General Health

1. Follow the directions on all medications--prescriptions and over-the-counter. Medications such as antihistamines, sleeping pills, and tranquilizers can cause dizziness.
2. Schedule regular eye exams. Impaired vision can cause unsteady walking.
3. Monitor blood pressure. Report any dizziness to a doctor immediately so they can make necessary adjustments.
4. Get up slowly after eating, resting, or lying down.



Getting Help

When you fall, your body naturally tenses. Take a moment to consider if you are hurt. If you think you are, do not try to get up. Yell for help or dial 911.

When trying to get up from a fall if you are not hurt:

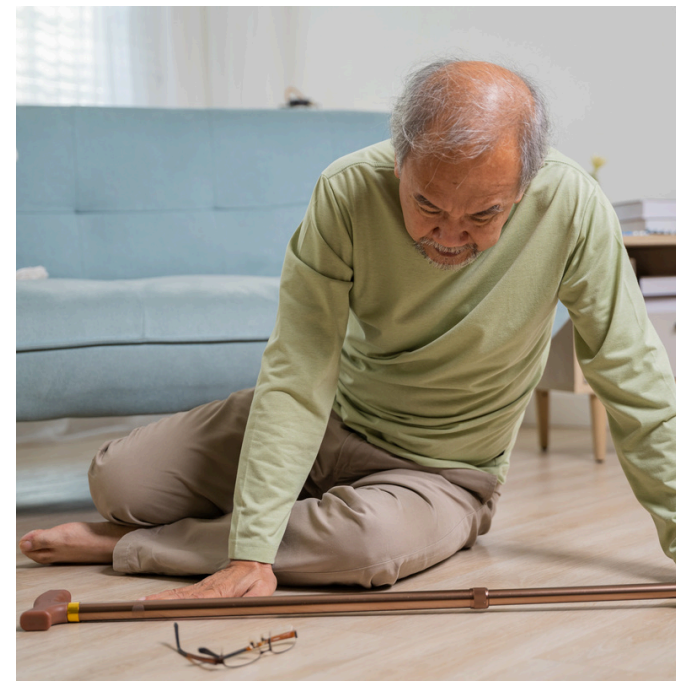
- ✓ Roll over naturally, turn your head in the direction of your roll.
- ✓ If you can, crawl to a stable piece of furniture such as a chair.
- ✓ Put both hands on the seat.
- ✓ Slowly pull yourself up using the strongest knee. Keep the other knee on the floor for stability.
- ✓ Slowly turn around to sit.

If you are at risk of falling, make contact with at least one person each day or consider subscribing to an emergency alert system.



For more information on Older Adult Safety, visit our website:

www.minookafire.com/olderadult/



Fall PREVENTION For Older Adults

Protecting Your Active Lifestyle



Courtesy of
Minooka Fire
Protection District

Avoiding Falls

Each year, nearly 2 million older adults are taken to the hospitals for fall injury treatment and over 7,000 older adults die as a result of falls. Half of all falls could have been prevented.

Balance and gait, sensory changes, and changes in reflexes can contribute to fall risk, especially in an older adult who already have a fear of falling. Medical conditions and medications can increase the possibility of a fall injury.

1 out of 3 people aged 65 and older fall each year.

Of those who fall, half are able to return to home to live independently.

Falls are the #1 cause of accidental death in persons 55 and over. The majority of accidental falls occur in homes during everyday activities.

Exercise to build strength and muscle tone and to keep joints and tendons more flexible.



Rugs, Runners, & Stairways

Yearly, about 2,500 people over 65 are treated in the ER for injuries from tripping over rugs and runners.

- Install a long handrail on staircases.
- Secure carpet, rugs, or stair runners that are not fastened down.
- Take your time when walking. Use walking aids when needed.
- Avoid deep pile, dark-colored, or patterned carpeting on steps that can make it difficult to see the step's edges clearly.
- Avoid sharp changes in flooring levels such as from high carpet to low vinyl.
- Use light-colored or reflector tape on stair treads.
- Have light switches at each end of the stairs.
- Wear well-fitted slippers or shoes with non-slip soles.



Protect Yourself Indoors and Outdoors

- Never walk into a dark room: all rooms should have a light switch or lamp by the door.
- Use nightlights in the hallways and rooms that are frequently used.
- Be able to reach a light switch or lamp from bed or a favorite chair. Have a flashlight near by.
- Run electrical cords against walls, and never under rugs or across doorways.
- Only carry what you can safely.
- In bedrooms, look out for scattered clothing, shoes, and blankets or untucked sheets.
- Watch for slippery sidewalks.
- Wipe up spill right away.
- Use a sturdy step stool with handrails to reach high cabinets. Long tongs or extended grabber tools help reach high items.
- Keep walkways clear of toys, magazines, newspapers, or yard and garden equipment.

Bathrooms

- Install a grab bar by the bath tub, shower, sink, and toilet. Tighten any loose fixtures.
- Set water heater below 120° F.
- Apply textured vinyl safety strips to the tub, shower, or tile floors, and use nonslip mats.
- Avoid scatter/throw rugs! Tack down or tape, cut-to-fit or rubber backed rugs.
- Watch out for slick soap or water spills
- Use nonslip bath or shower chairs.
- Never brace yourself on a towel bar.