

# What You Can Do To PREVENT FALLS



**Many falls can be prevented. By making some changes, you can lower your chances of falling.**



## **Begin a regular exercise program.**

Exercise is one of the most important ways to lower your chances of falling. It makes you stronger and helps you feel better. Exercises that improve balance and coordination (like Tai Chi) are most helpful.

Lack of exercise leads to weakness and increases your chances of falling.

Ask your doctor or health provider about the best type of exercise program for you.



## **Have your health care provider review your medicines.**

Have your doctor or pharmacist review all the medicines you take, even over-the-counter medicines. As you get older, the way medicines work in your body can change. Some medicines, or combinations of medicines, can make you sleepy or dizzy and can cause you to fall.

Drink alcohol in moderation, if at all. Drinking increases your chances of a fall.



## **Have your vision checked.**

Have your eyes checked by an eye doctor at least once a year. You may be wearing the wrong glasses or have a condition like glaucoma or cataracts that limits your vision. Poor vision can increase your chances of falling.



## **Make your home safer.**

- Remove things you can trip over (like papers, clothes, shoes and extension cords) from stairs and places where you walk.
- Remove small throw rugs or use double-sided tape to keep the rugs from slipping.
- Keep items you use often in cabinets you can reach easily without using a step stool.
- Have grab bars put in next to your toilet and in the tub or shower.
- Use non-slip mats in the bathtub and on shower floors.
- Improve the lighting in your home. As you get older, you need brighter lights to see well.
- Know where your pets are before you step... tripping over pets is fairly common.
- Wear well-fitting, securely tied shoes both inside and outside the house. Avoid going barefoot or wearing slippers.

**For more information, please call the Aging and Disability Resource Center at 1-877-6AK-ADRC (1-877-625-2372) or visit the Alaska Commission on Aging website at [www.alaskaaging.org](http://www.alaskaaging.org).**

Produced by the Alaska Commission on Aging and the Alaska Senior Fall Prevention Coalition

