

# HOW TO AVOID FALLS

The prevention of falls is important because many broken bones (fractures) occur due to falls. 1 in 3 people over age 65 and 1 in 2 people over 80 will have a fall each year. Broken bones can place a person at risk of losing their independence, even though most falls can be prevented.

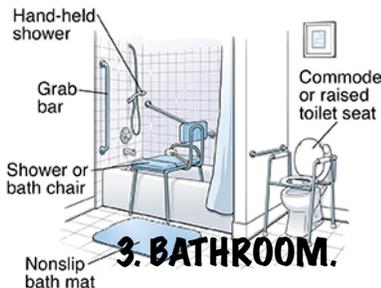
Problems associated with falls increase as we get older. This guide is designed to help you, your family, & the people who care for you to minimize the risk of falling. Following these steps, can help decrease your chance of falling and make your home safer.

## 1. REGULAR EXERCISE



## 2. EASY GRIP HANDRAILS.

Install on both sides of the stairs.



## 3. BATHROOM.

Use a non-slip bath mat in shower/bath. Install handrail near bath and/or toilet.



## 4. CLOTHING.

Avoid clothes that can cause a trip or slip.

## 5. GETTING UP.

Get up slowly from chair or bed. When you get up, blood pressure falls. As you get older, your body may take longer to adjust.



## 6. REPLACE WORN CARPET/RUGS.

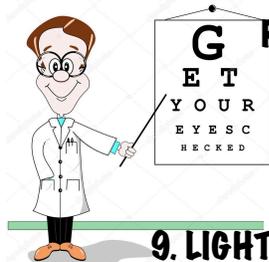
To avoid slips/trips.



## 7. FOOTWEAR.

Avoid ill fitting shoes, slippers, & heels.

## 8. HAVE REGULAR EYE TESTS.



## 9. LIGHTING.

Keep all areas well lit and a light near your bed.

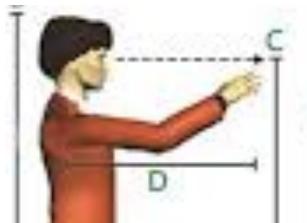


## 10. KEEP WALKWAYS CLEAR.



## 11. MINIMIZE BENDING & CLIMBING.

Keep items used often within eye & hip level.



## 12. TELEPHONE.

Do not rush to answer. Tell others it may take you longer to answer.

## 13. FALLS.

Have you had a recent fall or nearly fallen? If yes, speak to your GP.

# FALL PREVENTION & OSTEOPOROSIS

## **Question: What is Osteoporosis?**

- Osteoporosis causes bone to become fragile and break easily. A simple sneeze can cause ribs to fracture (break) due to severe undiagnosed Osteoporosis. Bone is a living tissue that is constantly being removed and replaced. Bones need normal sex hormones, calcium, vitamin D, proteins and weight bearing/ strengthening exercise to keep them healthy. As we get older, more bone is lost than is replaced. But, people with Osteoporosis lose more bone than people who do not have the disease.

## **Question: Who is affected by this disease?**

- Osteoporosis affects both sexes and all age groups, even children. Osteoporosis is the leading bone disease in the world, even though it is preventable and treatable in the majority of people.

## **Question: What are the most common fractures?**

- The most common bones to fracture are the hip, spine and wrist, however it can affect any bone.

## **Question: Why is it called the "Silent disease?"**

- Osteoporosis is known as the silent disease because people with Osteoporosis cannot feel their bones getting weaker. Typically the first sign/ symptom that a person may already have Osteoporosis is a broken bone from a trip and fall. If a person's bones were healthy they would not break so easily.

## **Question: What is Osteopenia?**

- Osteopenia is the early stages of Osteoporosis and can develop into Osteoporosis unless prevention methods are put in place.

## **Question: What are the signs/symptoms?**

- Broken bone due to trip or fall (low trauma fracture)
- Upper, middle, or lower back pain, especially if losing height or change in posture.
- A hump developing and/or change in body shape/size. The cause of a hump should always be investigated.
- Protruding head from the person's body

## **Question: Who is at risk of developing Osteoporosis?**

- There are 200 reasons why a person may develop Osteoporosis, below are only a few:
  - Genetics- family history, especially of a broken hip.
  - Eating disorders (past or present)
  - Steroids
  - Low Vitamin D levels
  - Gluten sensitivity/ Coeliac Disease
  - Gastrointestinal disorders
  - Klinefelter's Syndrome
  - Bone marrow disorders
  - Connective tissue disease
  - Multiple Sclerosis
  - Parkinson's Disease
  - Rheumatoid Arthritis
  - Endocrine Disorders