



Fall Prevention

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Encompass Health of Humble

Course Outline



Important Facts about Falls



Who falls



What causes falls



How to prevent falls



Conclusion

Important Facts about Falls

- About 1/4 of the population over the age of 65 falls each year, the risk increases with age. By the age of 80 over half of seniors fall annually.
- As large of number as this may seem, this falls short of the actual number since many incidents go unreported.
- Those who have fallen are 2-3 times more likely to fall again.
- Falls are the leading cause of death due to injury among the elderly. 1/5 falls cause a serious injury such as broken bones or head injury. 87% of all fractures in the elderly are due to falls.
- Up to 40% of people who have a stroke have a serious fall within the next year.
- Many people who fall, even if they are not injured, develop a fear of falling. This fear may cause them to limit their activities, which leads to reduced mobility and loss of physical fitness, and in turn increases their actual risk of falling.
- **GETTING HELP AFTER AN IMMOBILIZING FALL** improves the chance of survival by 80% and increases the likelihood of a return to independent living.

Common Causes of Falling



Lower body weakness.

Difficulties with walking and balance.



Use of medications, such as tranquilizers, sedatives or antidepressants. Even some over-the-counter medications can increase fall risk.



Vision problems.

Foot pain or poor footwear.



Home hazards or dangers such as:

Broken/uneven steps
Throw rugs or clutter that can be tripped over



Talk to Your Doctor

- Ask your doctor or healthcare provider to evaluate your risk for falling and talk with them about specific things you can do.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review your medications to see if any might make you dizzy or sleepy. This should include over-the-counter medication as well.
- Take your medications as prescribed.
- Report any side effects to your doctor.
- Ask your doctor or healthcare provider about taking vitamin D supplements.



RECOMMENDED EXERCISE

Chair Rise Exercise

What it does: Strengthens the muscles in your thighs and buttocks.

Goal: To do this exercise without using your hands as you become stronger.

How to do it:

1. Sit toward the front of a sturdy chair with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor, shoulder-width apart.
2. Rest your hands lightly on the seat on either side of you, keeping your back and neck straight, and chest slightly forward.
3. Breathe in slowly. Lean forward and feel your weight on the front of your feet.
4. Breathe out, and slowly stand up, using your hands as little as possible.
5. Pause for a full breath in and out.
6. Breathe in as you slowly sit down. Do not let yourself collapse back down into the chair. Rather, control your lowering as much as possible.
7. Breathe out.



Repeat 10-15 times. If this number is too hard for you when you first start practicing this exercise, begin with fewer and work up to this number.

Rest for a minute, then do a final set of 10-15.

Strength and Balance Exercise

- Do exercises that make your legs stronger and improve your balance.
- The CDC recommends The Chair Rise Exercise in their STEADI program. It is a great example of an exercise you can do at home to decrease your risk of falling.



Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention
National Center for Injury
Prevention and Control

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STEADI Stopping Elderly Accidents,
Deaths & Injuries





Have Your Eyes and Feet Checked

- Have your eyes checked by an eye doctor at least once a year and be sure to update your eyeglasses as needed.
- Changes in our feet occur as we age. Have your feet checked by your doctor if you are experiencing numbness or swelling.
- Wear proper footwear.
- Don't wear slippers, high heels, shoes without a sole, or shoes that have a narrow heel base.
- **DO WEAR** shoes with soles that don't slip or slide easily, shoes that secure the foot with laces or Velcro straps, and wear shoes in your home.



Make Your Home Safer

- Get rid of things you could trip over.
- Add grab bars inside and outside your tub or shower and next to the toilet.
- Put railings on both sides of stairs.
- Make sure home has lots of light by adding more or brighter light bulbs.
- Look out for pets.



Stay Independent. Prevent Falls.

Here is what we learned

- The risk of falling is greater as we age and with our aging population we will see even greater numbers of falls each year.
- Take all the precautions you can to help reduce your risk of falls.
- Remember there are resources for you if you have injured yourself after a fall. Having the right resources will give you the best opportunity to return back to your home and every day life.
- The CDC has many resources to assist you with fall prevention in their STEADI program. <https://www.cdc.gov/steady/>

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