



# How to Prevent Falls



**1** ■ **Exercise regularly** to build strength and improve your balance and coordination. Ask your doctor about the best physical exercise for you.

**2** ■ **Take your time.** Get out of chairs slowly. Sit a moment before you get out of your bed. Stand and get your balance before you walk. Be aware of your surroundings.

**3** ■ **Keep stairs and walking areas free** of electrical cords, shoes, clothing, books, magazines, and other items.

**4** ■ **Improve the lighting** in and outside your home. Use nightlights or a flashlight to light the path between your bedroom and the bathroom. Turn on the lights before using the stairs. See an eye specialist once a year—better vision can help prevent falls.

**5** ■ **Use non-slip mats** in the bathtub and on shower floors. Have grab bars installed on the wall next to the bathtub, shower, and toilet. Wipe up spilled liquids immediately.

**6** ■ **Be aware of uneven surfaces** indoors and outdoors. Use only throw rugs that have rubber, non-skid backing. Consider non-skid rug pads under rugs. Always smooth out wrinkles and folds in carpeting. Be aware of uneven sidewalks and pavement outdoors. Ask a family member or friend to clear ice and snow from outside stairs and walkways and always use hand rails if available. Step carefully.

**7** ■ **Stairways should be well lit** from both the top and the bottom. Have easy-to-grip handrails installed along the full length of both sides of the stairs.

**8** ■ **Wear sturdy, well-fitting, low-heeled shoes with non-slip soles.** They are safer than high heels, thick-soled athletic shoes, slippers, or stocking feet.