

ANYONE CAN FALL

Prevent it from happening to you

Understanding Your Risk

Anyone can fall, but the likelihood of falling increases as we age. Older adults fall more often because the conditions that contribute toward each person's risk of falling (also known as their fall risk factors), tend to increase with age. Falls among older adults can lead to negative health outcomes if they are not addressed right away, with the right people. Health care professionals can look at why a fall may have occurred. They can also help prevent future falls.

Did You Know?

About one in every three adults aged 65 years or more living at home will fall at least once a year. Falls are the leading cause of injury and hospitalizations in older Canadian adults. After a fall, people often become afraid of falling again. As a result, they may avoid events or activities. This can lead to loneliness, sadness, confusion, or anger. It can also result in a loss of independence.

FALLS ARE NOT A NORMAL PART OF AGING.
Talk to your health care provider if you have had a fall.

Finding Balance NOVA SCOTIA Trauma NB

Assessing Your Risk of Falling

Older adults should assess their risk of falling once a year. To assess your risk of falling:

1. Complete the Staying Independent Checklist. A paper copy is included with this package. Ask family and friends for their input.
2. Book an appointment with your primary care provider (family physician or nurse practitioner). Bring your completed checklist to share with your health care provider.

Fall Risk Factors

A fall risk factor is something that increases a person's chance of falling.

- Falls can happen because of even one risk factor. However, the more factors, the greater the risk of falling.
- Fall risk factors can be changed or eliminated. That is one reason we recommend that older adults report a fall report a fall immediately to the appropriate health care provider.
- Some of the fall risk factors that may be changed include:
    - Challenges moving, including feeling weak or unsteady when moving
    - Poor eyesight/vision
    - Need for more support from others
    - Poor nutrition
    - Lack of sleep
    - Health conditions including feeling dizzy or sleepy
    - Home design including tripping hazards
    - Fear of falling

Consulting Your Primary Care Provider

- Bring your completed Staying Independent Checklist.
- Tell them about any falls or near-falls you may have had over the past year.

If you do not currently have a provider or your provider is closing their practice, you are encouraged to call 8-1-1 or visit www.needafamilypractice.nshealth.ca to ensure that your name is added to the provincial Need a Family Practice Registry.

SCAN for the website

For more fall prevention information and **resources for older adults and caregivers**, visit the Finding Balance NS website at ***www.FindingBalanceNS.ca***

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