

# Check your risk for falls

For more information on preventing falls, details on balance exercises, to watch or order balance and exercise DVDs and videos, and to learn more about home safety checks, please visit



Check all of the following that apply to you:

[www.hfwcnny.org](http://www.hfwcnny.org)

Learn what you can do to reduce your risk of falling

- I fell recently
- I'm afraid of falling
- I have tripped/slipped/stumbled (these are considered "mini falls")
- I occasionally need to steady myself by leaning on something or someone
- I don't see very well, especially at night
- I sometimes feel dizzy or lightheaded
- I have trouble stepping up and down curbs or steps
- I have trouble getting up from a chair
- I have numbness or a "wooden" feeling in my legs or feet



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The more checks you have, the higher your risk is for falls. Most falls are preventable. There are many simple things you can do to help make your home a falls-free environment.



# Three easy ways to prevent falls



## Exercise daily

Daily exercises are proven to maintain and improve balance, which prevents falls. Try these simple exercises daily. Wear sturdy, well-fitting, flat-soled shoes or sneakers with room to wiggle your toes in at the top. Ask your doctor which exercises are best for you to improve your balance.

**One-legged stand.** Stand at a place with a sturdy support while you do the exercises.

*Easy:* Stand on one leg for up to 10 seconds. Repeat 3-6 times for each leg. *Moderate:* Stand on one leg while very slowly, swinging the other leg forward and backwards, all while maintaining your balance.

**Tai Chi Walking.** *Walking sideways:* Slowly step sideways while bending your knees and lifting your foot, like you're stepping over something. Land gently. Repeat 2-3 times on both sides. *Walking forward and backward:* Turn to the side and slowly take a few steps forward, and then a few steps backward. As you step, lift your foot as if you're stepping over something. Repeat 2-3 times.



## Make your home safer

Most falls occur in or around your own home. By conducting a home safety check, you'll eliminate hazards and help make your home a falls-free environment.

### Tips for a falls-free environment:

- ✓ Keep floors and stairs clear of clutter
- ✓ Secure railings near stairs and walkways
- ✓ Ensure hallways and stairways are well-lit
- ✓ Add night lights or push lights to hallways and entryways
- ✓ Keep a clear path from the bedroom to the bathroom
- ✓ Clearly mark any changes in floor level
- ✓ Remove area rugs
- ✓ Install grab bars and bath seats in the bathroom
- ✓ Keep frequently used household items within easy reach



## Know your medicines

Talk to your doctor about the medicines you currently take and how they might affect your balance.

Bring a list of all the prescriptions to your next appointment. Some medicines, especially when taken with others, can cause dizziness or weakness.

If you feel dizzy, for any reason, let your doctor know.

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**Falls Prevention**  
STEP UP TO STOP FALLS