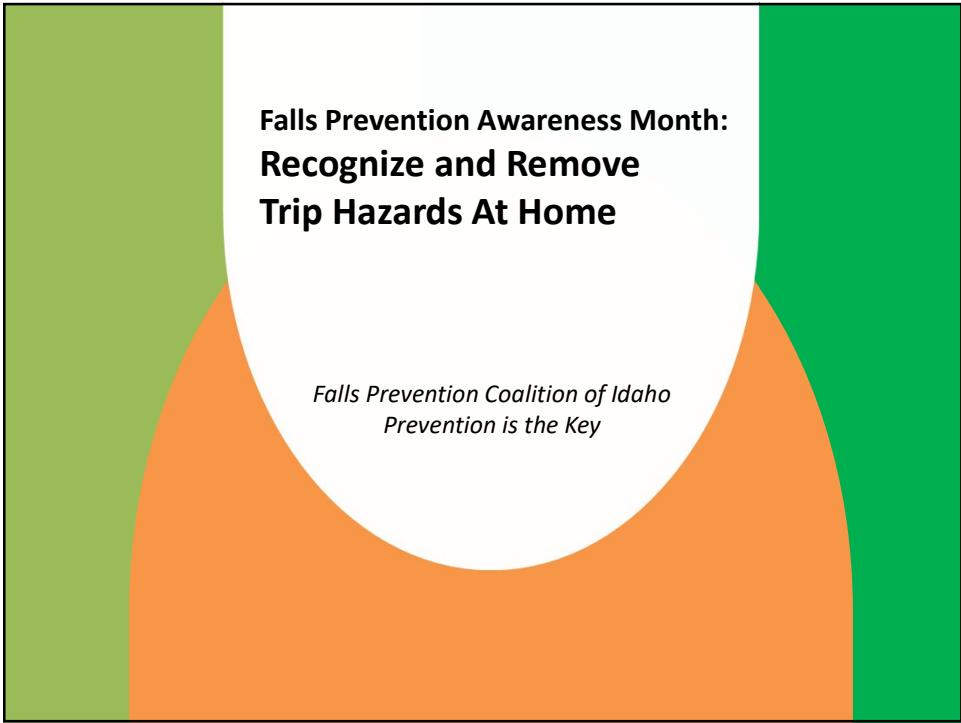




1

Seminar Materials

- Slides available from the Chat pane and on our website
www.aging.idaho.gov/falls
- Recording available on our YouTube Falls Prevention channel
<https://youtube.com/@idahoCOA>



2



Got Questions?

- Feel free to ask questions via the Q&A as you think of them
- Our presenter will answer them during Q&A at the end

3

Technical Emergency Plan

- If you have audio or video problems, please close out and log back in
- If we lose our presenter, the technical team will take over until he can log back in



4

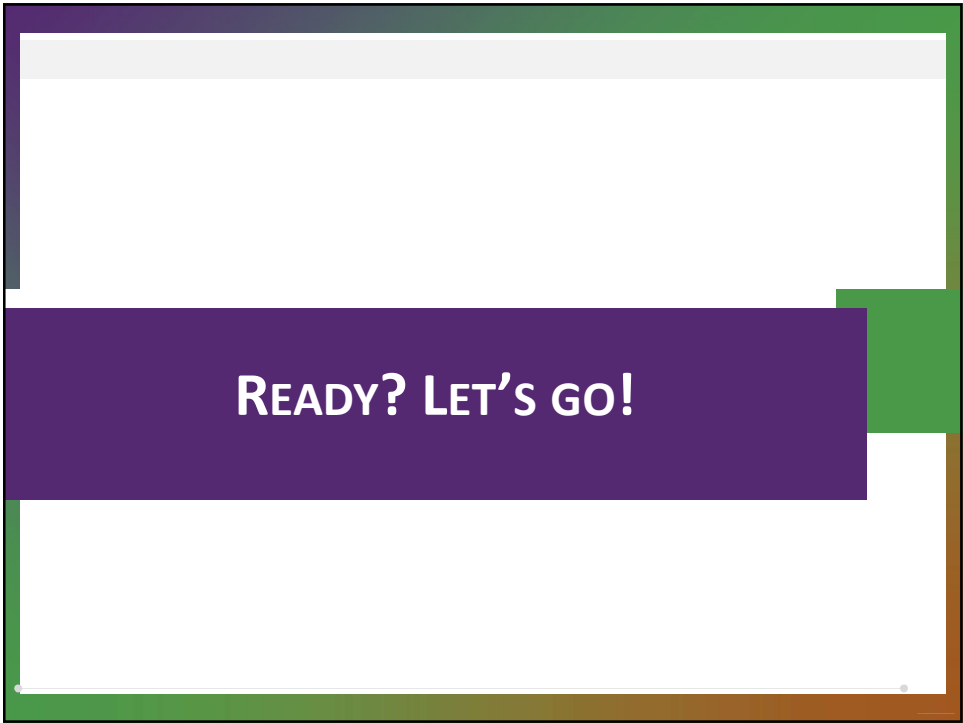
What We'll Discuss Today

- Understanding falls
- Entering your home
- Clear the way
- Light up your life
- Avoid wet & wild
- Getting a home safety audit
- Q&A



5

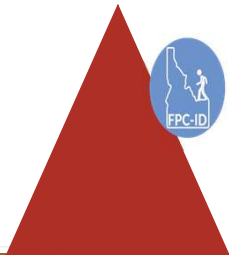
READY? LET'S GO!



6

WHERE IDAHO FALLS

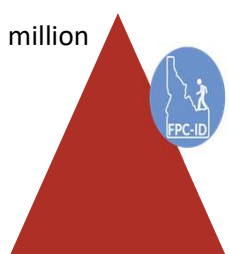
- Idaho in top 10 states for highest number of fatal elderly falls
- More than 75,000 older Idahoans report falling each year
- Over half of falls happen at home, and 23% of Idaho seniors live alone
- Falls are leading cause of injury-related death for older adults, and traumatic brain injuries for all ages
- 1 in 5 falls results in serious injuries, including 95% of hip fractures
- Idahoans pay \$164 million in fall-related medical costs every year
- Average cost of a fall in Idaho requiring medical attention \$37,000+



7

WHERE IDAHO FALLS

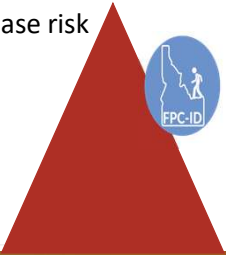
- 67% At Home
- 9% in Institutions
- 4.5% in Public Spaces
- Falls in bathroom most likely to result in injury
- Bedroom and stairs next most commonplace
- One-third of falls due to tripping or slipping
- Falls often associated with various environmental hazards such as slippery floors, carpets and rugs
- Floors and flooring materials responsible for over 2 million fall injuries each year



8

WHY FALLS HAPPEN

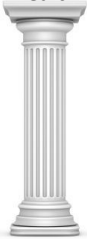
- Multifactorial
- The Person + The Situation
 - What they are doing
 - How they are doing it
 - How their body reacts (or doesn't react)
 - Where they are doing it
 - Environmental factors
- Falls happen at every age
- Physical factors associated with aging commonly increase risk
 - Reduced lower body strength
 - Limited flexibility
 - Slower reaction time
 - Reduced sensory perception



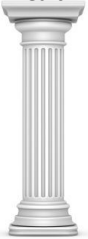
9

FPC-ID PILLARS OF FALLS PREVENTION

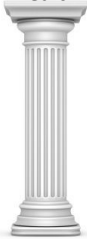
Nutritional Health



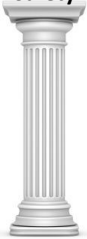
Physical Health



Emotional Health



Environmental Safety



10

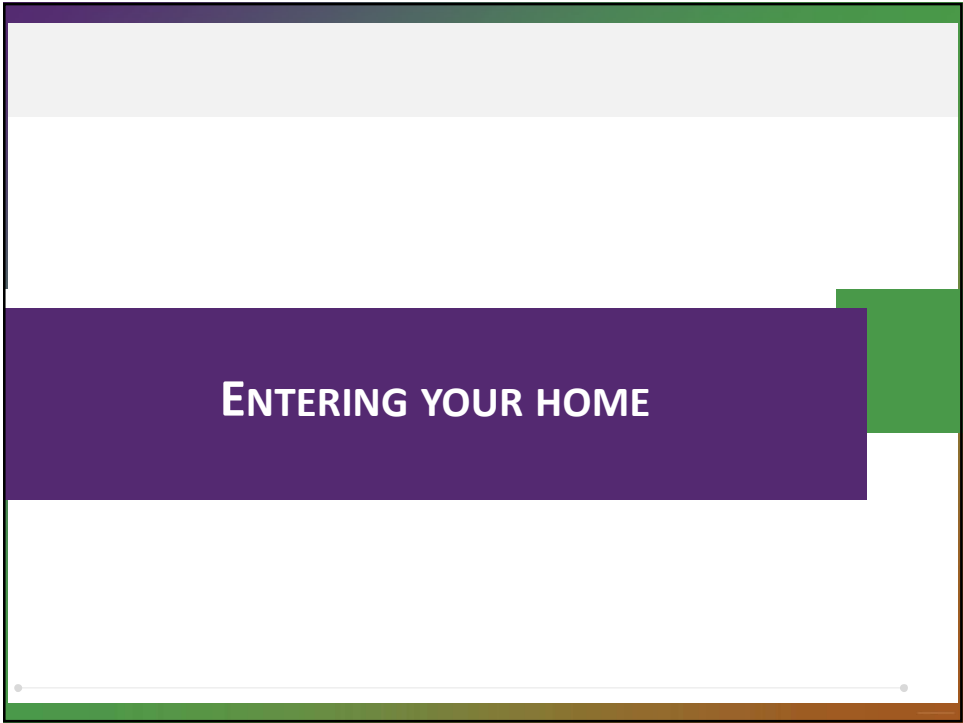


11

THE MATH OF A SLIP & FALL

A 5'9" person falling at 32.17 feet per second squared, strikes the floor at 20 feet per second or about 14 MPH

12



13



THINK ABOUT IT

- Consider:
 - Front door
 - Side or kitchen door
 - Garage
 - Patios/deck
- Steps
- Stairs
- Handrails
- Lighting (walkway & entrance)
- Rough/uneven surfaces (pavers, broken concrete, tree roots)
- Loose surfaces (gravel, sand)
- Roof/gutter drainage
- Snow accumulation

14



ONCE IN THE DOOR

- Clear entryway
- Lighting (motion sensor)
- Things in hands?
- What if you're wet?

15

CLEAR THE WAY

16

CLUTTER & CORDS

- Keep pathways clear
 - Plug in cords so they don't run across pathways
 - If necessary, use a cord cover
 - Keep drapery and blind cords shortened, tied up, or behind furniture
- Pick up things off the floor
- Keep kid stuff, pet things, and magazines/books in a basket



17



RUGS

- Leading cause of unintentional injury
- Remove or replace if do not lay flat
- Replace if slip on floor, particularly when wet
- Heavy mats provide more stable surface



18



RUGS WITH SENTIMENTAL VALUE?

- Have no slip liner added
- Add traction corners
- Hang on wall
- Give to family member



19



ARRANGING FURNITURE FOR SAFETY

- Physical ability can decline with age
- What used to be “comfortable” is now difficult to get in and out of
- Easy tasks can become risky over time
- Furniture is expensive to replace and can have sentimental value
- Risks with furniture are often just lived with



20



FURNITURE SOLUTIONS

Is it safe and sturdy ?

- If not, do something immediately
 - Repair it
 - Move it to an area so it is kept but not used
 - Give it to a family member



21



QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT SAFE FURNITURE ARRANGEMENT

- Does it block access to window blinds and shades?
- Is it pushing a rug into a trip hazard position?
- Can people sit and stand without other obstructions?
- Is traffic flow logical and safe in and out of the room?
- Is it possible to arrange furniture so they can be used as hand rails?



22

LIGHT UP YOUR LIFE

23



APPROPRIATE LIGHTING

- Bright enough
- Directional
- Warm vs. cool
- Dimmable
- Most important: Easy to turn on/off when needed

24



MORE ISN'T ALWAYS BETTER

- HAZARD: Too bright lights and reflective surfaces cause glare that can be blinding
- Solutions:
 - Use bright but not too bright lights
 - Turn on bulb “warm” color, if they have that setting
 - Lower shades or use curtain sheers to reduce glare
 - Place lamps where they won’t shine directly into eyes when using halls and walkways
 - Use colored tablecloths to cover bright white or reflective tabletops



25



WHAT’S DANGEROUS ABOUT THIS?

- Poor Lighting
- No reflective tape or paint on the stair steps
- No Paint or tape on handrail



26



STAIRS THE SAFE WAY

- Edge of each step clearly marked
- Stairs are uniform size
- Handrail well marked and sturdy
- Well lit
- High contrast



27



NIGHT LIGHTING

- HAZARD: Dark rooms and hallways at night
- Solution: Nightlights, ideal color is red
 - Provides enough light to show the way and avoid obstacles
 - Especially important for people with low vision
 - Least disruptive to circadian rhythm (sleep-wake cycle) which is more important as we grow older
 - Sets a pleasant atmosphere and mood for a room



28



AVOID NIGHTTIME EMERGENCY FALLS

- HAZARD: Trying to turn on lights at night when you are in a hurry
- Solutions:
 - Use a touch lamp at your bedside
 - Keep a flashlight with a moderate beam at your bedside
- Any appropriate light that is easy to operate is a good choice



29

AVOID WET & WILD

30



SLIPPERY SURFACES

- HAZARD: Wearing socks on smooth surfaces
- Solution: Rubber soled slippers or traction socks
- Keep mop or towels near entryways to dry spills/drips
- Use non-slip rugs



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BATHROOMS

- Hazard: Wet, hard surfaces, limited space
- Room with highest risk of falls
 - Frequently used
- Solutions:
 - Keep surfaces dry (slips)
 - Reduce clutter (rugs, clothes, towels, cords, toys) (trips)
 - Non-slip rug (safe and comfortable)



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BATHROOMS

- HAZARD: Toilets can have condensation that drips on floor
- Solutions:
 - Non-slip rug
 - Grab bars
 - Standing Security Pole (uses pressure springs)
 - Walker can assist
 - A walker can be used to assist as well
 - None require drilling into walls or floors



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BATHROOMS

- HAZARD: Added risk of hitting head when fall (smaller room with hard fixtures)
- Bathtub is most common cause of head injury in bathroom falls
- Sink, countertop, and toilet are also hazards
- Solutions:
 - Keep surfaces dry
 - Use grab bars
 - Keep 3 points of contact



34



KITCHENS

- Hazards: Same as bathrooms
- Additional solutions:
 - Clean spills immediately
 - Keep items within reach
 - Use a grabber or sturdy step ladder with top handle
 - Move slowly if needing to bend over

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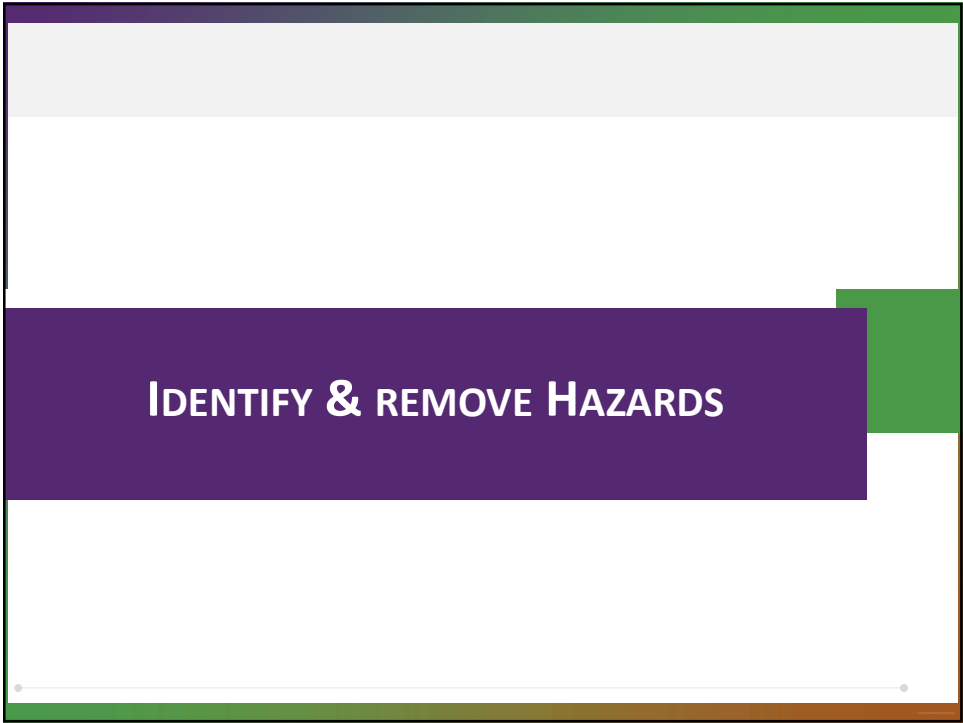


AND DON'T FORGET...

- Great companions and a huge part of senior health.
- HAZARD:
 - Like to be close to their owners
 - Often rest on floor, quiet, and not thought of until stepped on
- Solutions
 - Place a collar with a bell on your pet, or a very bright colored collar
 - Train pet to use a specific bed or sleeping area (cats not so much)
 - At night place pet in a specific room with appropriate supplies
 - Consider getting a breed/color that is in contrast with your decor



36



37



HOME MODIFICATIONS

- Carefully consider how changes may impact mobility through your home
- Look for:
 - Different level edges between original home and additions
 - Carpets that are not stretched
 - Obstacle/space for adaptive equipment



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REQUEST A FREE HOME AUDIT!

- Many agencies provide free home safety checks
 - Community health workers
 - Fire departments
 - Fit and Fall Proof programs
 - YMCA
 - Religious organizations
 - Universities/healthcare or social work programs
 - Habitat for Humanity
- Often, an “outside eye” can see things you and others may not
- Many fixes cost nothing
- Easier, less time-consuming, less painful, and less expensive to meet with someone for an hour than recover from a fall



39

What Questions Do You Have?

Enter questions into the Q&A

We will answer them

as time allows



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Ready to Assist



Your local Area Agency on Aging is ready to assist with services and referrals
<http://aging.idaho.gov/Area-Agencies-On-Aging/>

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We hope you continue to be falls-free in ID!

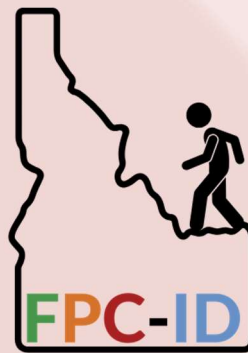
Last FPAM 2026 Seminar:
Preventing Falls Is a Weighty Matter
with Dr. Shawn Simonson
Today starting at 1 PM MDT/noon PDT
Register now: www.aging.idaho.gov/falls

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5 Simple Steps to Reduce Your Risk Now

1. Eat well & drink water
2. Be active and wear properly fitting shoes
3. Talk regularly with your healthcare team, including medication reviews
4. Check and correct your vision & hearing
5. Fix tripping hazards in your home

***Take Action to Prevent Falls Now
Prevention is the Best Solution***



Falls Prevention Coalition of Idaho

***Join Us Today
Learn to be falls-free in Idaho!***

Stay on your feet, stay healthy and safe. Live life to its fullest with confidence!

Contact ICOA to learn more about programs and local resources available.

Call the ICOA main office
208-334-3833

Or Visit ICOA website
www.aging.idaho.gov/falls



***Do Not Wait for
an Emergency
to Learn About
Preventing Falls***



Are You at Risk of Falling?

Many Risks can be Resolved or Minimized

- Fallen in the past year?
- Unsteady standing, walking, or stepping up/down?
- Take medications?
- Lost any feeling in your feet?
- Uncorrected vision or hearing?
- Often rush to the bathroom?

Do you...

- Have a chronic condition like arthritis, diabetes, or pain?
- Have a disability?
- Limit activity because you worry about falling?
- Feel depressed or lonely?

Each **“yes”** indicates an increased fall risk

Read on & Learn how to Prevent Falls!

Partner with Us

Reduce Falls Risk through Four Pillars of Falls Prevention

Nutritional Health - Choose healthy food, eat regularly, and stay hydrated. Talk with a dietitian.

Physical Health - Stay active and mobile. Strength & flexibility improve balance. Work with a healthcare team to manage chronic conditions, review medications, and seek assistance for continence issues.

Emotional Health - Fear of falling & worry over continence may limit social activities. Loneliness is a common result. This can cause a decrease in strength & balance. Address these concerns with professionals.

Environmental Safety - Take steps to prevent falls at home. Identify & remove hazards in the home; free assistance & resources are available for simple or complex issues.

You Can Reduce Falls

Awareness. Education. Action.

You've already taken the first step! Gain awareness, understand fall risks, and take action to minimize those risks.

- ✓ Research strategies to reduce your risks
- ✓ Access community resources such as: presentations, classes, and workshops
- ✓ Take steps to better manage chronic conditions and medications

Choose Your Adventure!
Have fun playing Bingocize® or take an exercise class to stay active & engaged in the community.

You can learn to be falls-free while enjoying life.

Contact your local community or senior center for information on exercise, fall prevention programs, or options for improving home safety.

Check for Safety

A Home Fall Prevention Checklist for Older Adults



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

For additional information on fall prevention, visit
go.usa.gov/xN9XA

Falls Prevention Coalition of Idaho
www.aging.idaho.gov/falls

STEADI

Stopping Elderly Accidents,
Deaths & Injuries

Use this checklist to find and fix hazards in your home.

STAIRS & STEPS (INDOORS & OUTDOORS)

Are there papers, shoes, books, or other objects on the stairs?

- ☐ Always keep objects off the stairs.

Are some steps broken or uneven?

- ☐ Fix loose or uneven steps.

Is there a light and light switch at the top and bottom of the stairs?

- ☐ Have an electrician put in an overhead light and light switch at the top and bottom of the stairs. You can get light switches that glow.

Has a stairway light bulb burned out?

- ☐ Have a friend or family member change the light bulb.

Is the carpet on the steps loose or torn?

- ☐ Make sure the carpet is firmly attached to every step, or remove the carpet and attach non-slip rubber treads to the stairs.

Are the handrails loose or broken? Is there a handrail on only one side of the stairs?

- ☐ Fix loose handrails, or put in new ones. Make sure handrails are on both sides of the stairs, and are as long as the stairs.

FLOORS

When you walk through a room, do you have to walk around furniture?

- ☐ Ask someone to move the furniture so your path is clear.

Do you have throw rugs on the floor?

- ☐ Remove the rugs, or use double-sided tape or a non-slip backing so the rugs won't slip.

Are there papers, shoes, books, or other objects on the floor?

- ☐ Pick up things that are on the floor. Always keep objects off the floor.

Do you have to walk over or around wires or cords (like lamp, telephone, or extension cords)?

- ☐ Coil or tape cords and wires next to the wall so you can't trip over them. If needed, have an electrician put in another outlet.

KITCHEN

Are the things you use often on high shelves?

- ☐ Keep things you use often on the lower shelves (about waist high).

Is your step stool sturdy?

- ☐ If you must use a step stool, get one with a bar to hold on to. Never use a chair as a step stool.

BEDROOMS

Is the light near the bed hard to reach?

- ☐ Place a lamp close to the bed where it's easy to reach.

Is the path from your bed to the bathroom dark?

- ☐ Put in a nightlight so you can see where you're walking. Some nightlights go on by themselves after dark.

BATHROOMS

Is the tub or shower floor slippery?

- ☐ Put a non-slip rubber mat or self-stick strips on the floor of the tub or shower.

Do you need some support when you get in and out of the tub, or up from the toilet?

- ☐ Have grab bars put in next to and inside the tub, and next to the toilet.





HOME FALL PREVENTION

CHECKLIST FOR TRIBAL MEMBERS

OUTSIDE: ENTRANCE TO THE HOME

Q: When you are walking up to your door are their objects blocking your pathway?

- ☐ Have a family member or someone help you remove objects from the pathway leading up to your home.

Q: At night can you clearly see the pathway leading up to the entrance of your home?

- ☐ Have an electrician install lights if needed or have a family member replace light bulbs. Also, mark stairs so uneven surfaces are visible.

Q: If you have steps leading into the entrance of the home, are handrails broken or absent on both sides of the stairs?

- ☐ Have a carpenter install handrails along the full length of stairs on both sides.

Q: Do you have outdoor or indoor pets?

- ☐ Be cautious when dealing with pets. Many falls involve owners tripping over their animals.

FLOORS: LOOK AT THE FLOOR IN EACH ROOM

Q: Do you have throw rugs on the floor?

- ☐ Remove rugs or use double-sided tape or a non-slip backing so the rugs won't slip or fold. If carpet is frayed have a carpenter replace or tack down worn out areas of carpet.

Q: When you walk through a room, do you have to walk around furniture?

- ☐ Ask someone to move the furniture so your path is clear.

Q: Are there papers, books, towels, shoes, magazines, boxes, blankets, or other objects on the floor?

- ☐ Pick up things that are on the floor. Always keep objects off the floor.

Q: Do you have to walk over or around wires or cords (like lamp, telephone, or extension cords)?

- ☐ Coil or tape cords and wires next to the wall so you can't trip over them. If needed, have an electrician put in another outlet.

STAIRS AND STEPS: LOOK AT THE STAIRS YOU USE BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE YOUR HOME

Q: Are there papers, shoes, books, or other objects on the stairs?

- ☐ Pick up things on the stairs. Always keep objects off stairs.

Q: Are some steps broken or uneven?

- ☐ Fix loose or uneven steps. If uneven surfaces are hard to see, mark edges of steps in contrasting colors.

Q: Are you missing a light over the stairway?

- ☐ Have an electrician put in an overhead light at the top and bottom of the stairs.

Q: Do you have only one light switch for your stairs (only at the top or at the bottom of the stairs)?

- ☐ Have an electrician put in a light switch at the top and bottom of the stairs. You can get light switches that glow.

Q: Has the stairway light bulb burned out?

- ☐ Have a friend or family member change the light bulb.

Q: Is the carpet on the steps loose or torn?

- ☐ Make sure the carpet is firmly attached to every step, or remove the carpet and attach non-slip rubber treads to the stair.

Q: Are the handrails loose or broken? Is there a handrail on only one side of the stairs?

- ☐ Fix loose handrails or put in new ones. Make sure handrails are on both sides of the stairs and are as long as the stairs.

KITCHEN: LOOK AT YOUR KITCHEN AND EATING AREA

Q: Are the things you use often on high shelves?

- ☐ Keep things you use often on the lower shelves (about waist level).

Q: Is your step stool unsteady?

- ☐ If you must use a step stool, get one with a bar to hold on to. Never use a chair as a step stool.

BATHROOMS: LOOK AT ALL OF YOUR BATHROOM

Q: Are the tub or shower floors slippery?

- ☐ Put a non-slip rubber mat or self-stick strips on the floor of the tub or shower. *Tip: Regular socks tend to be slippery on tile surfaces.*

Q: Do you need some support when you get in and out of the tub or up from the toilet?

- ☐ Have a carpenter put grab bars inside the tub and next to the toilet.

BEDROOMS: LOOK AT ALL OF YOUR BEDROOMS

Q: Is the light near the bed hard to reach?

- ☐ Place a lamp close to the bed where it's easy to reach or have a flash light nearby.

Q: Is the path from your bed to the bathroom dark?

- ☐ Put in a night-light so you can see where you're walking. Some night-lights go on by themselves after dark.

Q: Is your bed easy to get on and off of?

- ☐ Adjust bed height so your legs are not too bent while sitting and not too high where your feet can't touch the ground.

OTHER THINGS YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT FALLS

- **FOOTWEAR:** Wear shoes both inside and outside the house. Avoid going barefoot or wearing slippers.
- **LIGHTING:** Improve the lighting in your home. Put in brighter light bulbs. Florescent bulbs are bright and cost less to use.
- **MORE LIGHTING TIPS:** It's safest to have uniform lighting in a room. Add lighting to dark areas. Hang lightweight curtains or shades to reduce glare.
- **EMERGENCY CONTACTS:** Keep emergency numbers in large print near each phone.
- **TELEPHONE:** Put a phone near the floor in case you fall and can't get up.
- **LIFE ALERT:** If available in your community, think about wearing an alarm device that will bring help in case you fall and can't get up.



ALBUQUERQUE AREA SOUTHWEST
TRIBAL EPIDEMIOLOGY CENTER
WWW.AASTEC.NET • AASTECINFO@AAIHB.ORG
1-800-658-6717 (TOLL FREE)



TRIBAL
INJURY
PREVENTION
PROGRAM

Adapted from the CDC website: www.cdc.gov/steady/patient.html