

Thousands of older adults fall each year, with many of them experiencing multiple falls.

Most falls can be prevented by:

- i Reviewing Medication: the number and type of medications can cause excess fatigue, dizziness or loss of balance, contributing to falls. Check this out with your doctor or pharmacist.
- i Exercise: regular exercise, including muscle - strengthening moves can help increase stability.
- i Home modifications: consider adding safety features to your home such as handrails on both sides of stairs, additional lighting in dim areas, raised toilet seats and non-slip decals for tubs.
- i Attention to other health factors: diminished vision, vertigo, knee and hip issues can all contribute to an increased fall risk. Talk to your doctor about how to mitigate risks specific to yours or your loved ones medical needs.

Research says that the home environment is responsible for about a third of all falls. Even a few minor changes in the home may help prevent the next fall from occurring.

Additional Services

Senior Network Services

(831) 462-0880

Provides seniors and people with disabilities with information, guidance and assistance in finding services.

Meals on Wheels

(831) 464-3180

Provides meals to seniors, in the home or at a number of locations within the county.

Senior Network Services Registry

(831) 462-4734

Matches seniors with providers who provide home help and home maintenance.

Helping Hands—Senior Home Repair Program

(831) 427-5070

Social service agencies can refer low-income senior homeowners to this program, to receive minor home repairs to reduce safety and health risks.



Fall Prevention Home Safety Checklist



Central Fire District of Santa Cruz County

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Additional Safety Tips

- i If you have throw rugs, remove them. Throw rugs can slip or buckle easily. Second best—adhere throw rugs to the floor with 2-sided tape or thin specialty carpet mats made for tis purpose.
- i Floors without rugs can be slippery. Use non-skid shoes or slippers, and don't walk on linoleum, hardwood or tile floors with socks only.
- i Consider getting a raised toilet seat if you have difficulty getting on/off the toilet.
- i Move items you use frequently to lower shelves and drawers, to lessen the need for stepstools and overextending.
- i NEVER use a towel rack for support.
- i Consider having a chair to use when shaving, drying hair or applying makeup.
- i If you need to use a step stool, make sure it has a bar to hold onto. Never use a chair as a step stool!
- i Consider installing carpet to avoid slippery floors.
- i Consider a personal response system in case of falls.

Fall Prevention Checklist

OK

Needs
Attention

Doesn't
Apply

Go through your rooms carefully and follow this checklist. If you have a check in the "Needs Attention" column, see what you can do to fix the problem.

ENTRANCES, STAIRS & HALLWAYS

Steps—are their railings on both sides, and are they secure?

Is the stairway path well lit & able to be lighted from the top and bottom?

Do you use long-lasting bulbs, so they don't need to be changed as often?

Are there any loose or worn steps, or loose carpeting on steps or hallways?

LIVING ROOM & BEDROOMS

Can you turn on lights upon entrance into the room?

Are phone and extension cords away from all walking areas?

Are floors clear of clutter: shoes, pet toys, etc?

Do you have throw rugs?

KITCHEN

Are items like pots and pans out of reach?

Do all mats in the kitchen have nonskid backing?

Do you have to step over or around things to get to appliances or eating areas?

BATHROOMS

Is there a night light in the bathroom?

Does your shower and/or tub have non-skid mats or decals?

Does your shower and/or tub have sturdy grab-bars?

Are floors kept dry, and have a non-slip surface?

Are you able to get on and off the toilet easily?

OUTDOOR AREAS

Are walks and driveways free of breaks and uneven surfaces?

Are your garden hoses looped on a hose reel?

Do you have stairway handrails?

Do you have outdoor lighting to provide safe walking at night?