

How to Prevent a Fall: 4 Smart Moves



... because health matters!

For more information, ask for the

Injury Prevention Program

(705) 743-1000

www.pcchu.ca

Check out the booklet "Smart Moves" at your local library.



A community group of individuals and agencies dedicated to reducing the number of falls by adults age 65 and over.

Adapted with the permission of the Hastings & Prince Edward Counties Health Unit and Smart Moves by SmartRisk, December 2006.



What Do I Need to Know About Falls?

As we age the risk of falling increases:

- 1 in 3 people over the age of 65 will fall at least once each year.
- 90 percent of hip fractures in older adults are related to falls.
- Half of seniors who break a hip require long-term care within one year.
- Falls ARE NOT a normal part of aging. Most falls can be predicted and prevented. Good planning and common sense measures can greatly reduce your chance of having a fall.



Checkout Your Personal Risk For a Fall

- Have you fallen before?
- Are you afraid of falling?
- Do you have osteoporosis?
- Do you have arthritis?
- Are you physically inactive?
- When you get up from a chair, do you push with your arms?
- Do you sometimes lose your balance and does this affect your walking?
- Do you have your vision checked often?
- Do you take more than one medication?
- Do you take sleeping pills to help you sleep?



If you answered YES to any of these questions, you may be at a risk for a fall, so...

These 4 Smart Moves Will Help You Prevent a Fall



Plan Ahead for Healthy Bones

After age 30 the cells that build bones do not work as well. Bones can become thinner, weaker and may break more easily. This condition is called Osteoporosis.

Talk to your health care provider to find out if you are at risk for developing osteoporosis.

- Ask your doctor if you need a bone mineral density (BMD) test.
- Make sure you get enough calcium (1500 mg) and Vitamin D (800 iu) daily through food and supplements.



Be Active

Physical activity can reduce your risk of falling at any age. Talk to your health care provider about what exercises you can do. If you don't use it, you could lose it!



Look First

Most falls happen at home. To reduce your risk of injury:

- Use handrails on stairs
- Put night lights and grab bars in the bathroom;
- Keep a cordless phone nearby to avoid rushing for a phone;
- Be aware of your surroundings inside and out - mats; electric cords, even pets can cause a fall.



Choose Smart

Many drugs have side effects that can increase your risk of a fall. These include sleeping pills and medication for depression. Tell your doctor about **all** the medications you take; include prescription, over-the-counter, vitamins, herbal remedies and alcohol use.