

IMPORTANT THINGS YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT FALLS

The Dutchess County Department of Health and Office for Aging have joined together to provide residents with valuable information in an effort to protect against falls.

Begin a Regular Exercise Program

Regular exercise is one of the most important ways to lower your risk of falling. Exercises to improve balance and coordination like Tai Chi and strengthening exercises are most helpful.

Have Your Health Care Provider Review Your Medicines

Have your doctor or pharmacist review all of the medicines you take including over the counter medicines. Some medicines or combinations of medicines may cause drowsiness, confusion, or dizziness all of which increase your chances of falling.

Have Your Vision Checked

Have your vision checked by an eye doctor at least once a year. Physical conditions which weaken your vision, such as cataracts or glaucoma, or wearing the wrong glasses can increase your chance of falling.

Get Up Slowly After Your Sit or Lie Down

Wear Shoes Inside and Outside.

Avoid going barefoot or wearing slippers.

Improve Lighting in Your Home.

Keep Emergency Numbers in Large Print Near Each Phone.



Do a Home Safety Assessment

On the back of this sheet is a helpful list to help you identify home hazards that are easy to overlook but easy to fix.

**For More Information,
Contact the Office for the Aging
at 845.486.2555**

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County Executive

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HOME SAFETY ASSESSMENT

Below is a list to identify home hazards that are easy to overlook but easy to fix.

FLOORS:

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

Ask someone to move the furniture so that you have a clear path.

Q: Are there throw rugs on the floor?

Remove throw rugs or use double-sided tape or non-slip backing so rugs won't slip.

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

Pick up items and always keep objects off 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 or have an electrician put in another outlet.

BATHROOM:

Q: Is tub or shower floor slippery?

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

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

Put grab bars inside the tub and next to toilet. You can also install a shower chair or bench and a hand-held shower.

Q: Can you get on and off the toilet easily?

Install a raised toilet seat. You can also install a grab rail on wall next to toilet.

STAIRS & STEPS (inside & outside):

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

Pick up items and always keep objects off stairs.

Q: Are some steps uneven or loose?

Fix loose or uneven steps.

Q: Is the carpet loose or torn on steps?

Carpet should be firmly attached to every step, or remove carpet and attach non-skid treads to stairs.

Q: Do you have lighting on the stairs?

Have an electrician put a light switch on top and the bottom of stairs. If a light bulb burns out ask a friend to fix it.

Q: Are the handrails loose or broken or only on 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:

Q: Are things you use often on high shelves?

Keep items you use often in cabinets you can easily reach. If you must use a step stool get one with a bar to hold. Never use a chair as a step stool.

BEDROOM:

Q: Is there a light near the bed and on the path to the bathroom?

Place a lamp close to the bed in easy reach and a night light so you can see where you are walking. Some night lights go on by themselves after dark.