

Home Safety 101: Preventing Falls



Small Falls, Big Deal

One of the easiest and most impactful ways to make your home safer is to make it as fall-proof as possible. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one out of three seniors fall each year.¹ Falls might not seem like a big problem until you know what's really at risk. Being hurt in a fall can threaten your ability to live independently and make it hard to do things like bathe and walk. One out of five falls causes a serious injury like a broken bone or head injury. Preventing falls will keep you living a healthy, happy life.

There's good news

Falling is not inevitable, even as you get older. Falls can be prevented by taking a few simple steps. Talk to your doctor about steps you can take to reduce the chance you will fall or break a bone—or keep from falling again.

Take these steps to prevent trips and falls



Get moving.

Better balance and more strength come with exercise. Do weight-bearing exercises such as walking, weight training or climbing stairs regularly to maintain healthy bones and muscles.



Monitor your medications.

According to the National Institutes of Health, people who take four or more medicines—no matter what they are for—are more likely to fall.² Have your doctor review your medications and discuss ways to reduce side effects or interactions.



Check your Eyesight.

Have your vision checked every year. Take reading glasses off before you take a step. Make sure areas are well-lit and walk carefully if it's dark.



Test your Bone Density.

Talk to your doctor about a bone density test and make sure your diet has enough calcium.



Fall-proof your home.

Turn the page for helpful tips to make your home as safe as possible.



At CenterWell, staying well is the key to living well.

Call your CenterWell doctor if you're experiencing any of the following symptoms:

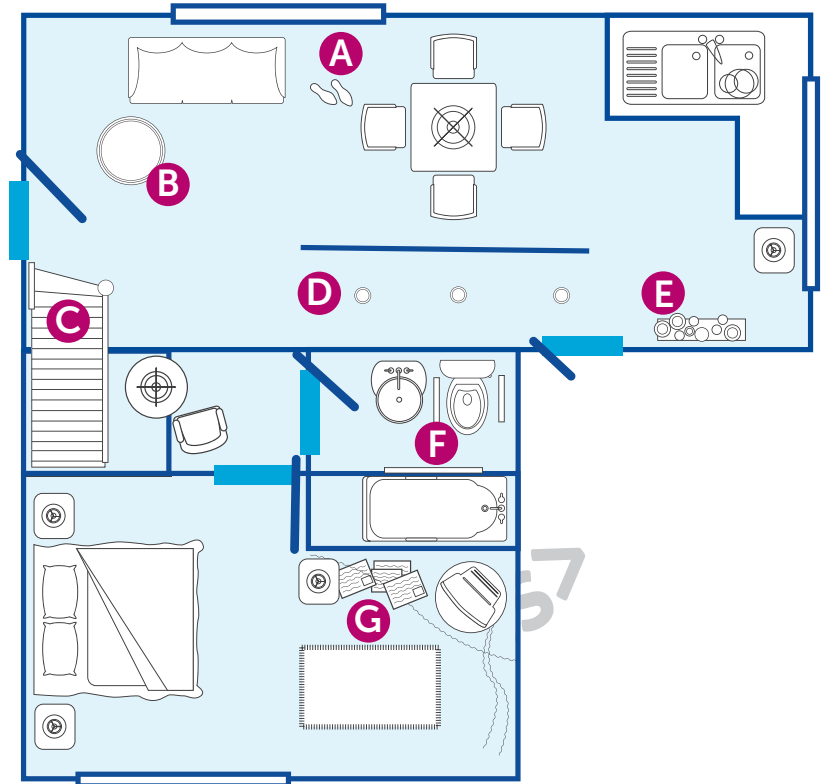
- Trouble with walking or balance
- A recent fall
- Problems with your vision
- Medication side effects that cause dizziness

Is your home fall-proof?



More people fall in the home than anywhere else. Review the diagram below for hazards you can avoid and changes you can make to fall-proof your home.

- A. Footwear** – Wear nonslip footwear that’s comfortable and fits correctly. Keep laces tightly tied, and if you have trouble tying laces, look for shoes with Velcro®.
- B. Furniture** – Arrange your furniture so it does not block walkways. Be sure that sofas and chairs are high enough so you can easily sit down and get up.
- C. Handrails** – Install handrails on both sides of stairwells. Be sure they are firmly fastened in place.
- D. Lighting** – Place night lights in dark or dim places, like hallways and bathrooms to guide your steps in the dark.
- E. Medications** – Review medications regularly with your doctor to learn about any potential side effects that could lead to a fall.



- F. Grab Bars** – Install grab bars next to the toilet and in the shower to improve your stability on slick or wet surfaces.
- G. Remove Clutter** – Reduce or remove tripping hazards. Tape down or move any electrical or telephone cords. Remove area rugs or check that they have nonslip backings.

Sources:

¹“Important Facts about Falls,” Center for Disease Control and Prevention, last accessed August 16, 2021, www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Falls/adultfalls.htm.

²“Falls and Older Adults.” National Institutes of Health, last accessed August 16, 2021, <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/prevent-falls-and-fractures>.

This publication offers general health-related information and is not a substitute for professional healthcare. For individualized medical guidance, talk to your doctor.