

Preventing Falls in the Elderly

- **Regular exercise**, especially those that work on balance like yoga and tai chi, can help steady the elderly adult. Weight-bearing exercises that slow bone loss and lower-body strengthening exercises are especially helpful.
- **Physical therapy** may be useful for improving balance and walking confidence. Your doctor or health care provider may be able to make that referral.
- **Stand up slowly** from a seated or lying position.
- **Wear rubber soled shoes** to avoid slipping.
- **Make regular eye and hearing check-ups** to ensure they are fitted with glasses with the optimal prescription for clear vision. Interestingly, even wearing bifocals while walking or on steps may blur the vision enough to cause falls. Proper hearing can ensure no cues are missed.
- **Elder proofing a home** taking elderly needs and deficits into account much as we do for babies is often neglected. (See article below.)
- **Regular dizziness may indicate an underlying medical condition** with respect to blood pressure, circulation, or sensory issues which should be checked out by a physician.
- **Have the doctor or pharmacist review all medications** to identify those most likely to cause dizziness and drowsiness.
- **Limit the amount of alcohol** consumed.
- **Get enough sleep.**