

More than one third of adults over age 65 fall each year.

Falls are the leading cause of injuries and injury deaths among older adults. (Center for Disease Control, 2006)

Falling is not an inevitable part of aging. Steps can be taken to prevent falls.

Stay on Your Feet and In Your Home



Better bones and balance

- Exercise regularly
- Add strength
- Improve balance
- Maintain flexibility

Have **regular medical checkups** and follow the doctor's orders. Address these health factors that **increase** falls:

- Muscle weakness
- Joint and foot problems
- Gait and balance disorders
- Vision deterioration
- Depression
- Poor nutrition
- Fatigue

Manage medications

- Watch side effects
- Review medications annually
- Remember O-T-C meds are **drugs**, too

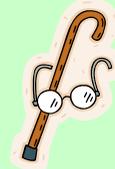


Consider supplementing your diet with **Calcium** and **Vitamin D**



Footwear:

Make certain shoes fit, are comfortable, supportive and you **WEAR** them! (Give up slick slippers)



Use your tools: Glasses, canes, walkers, hearing aids, handrails, grab bars, grabbers, braces.

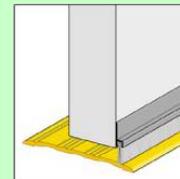
Clear the Clutter.

Keep only often used items convenient.



Light the way. Leave lights on, use light and motion sensors, night lights, timers, flashlights. Never walk into a dark room.

Smooth the way: Check for any abrupt elevation changes in your home. These could be in doorways or when floor coverings change (vinyl to carpet).



Add rails to both sides of stairs and a grab bar at a single step. Mark stair edges and add non-skid surfaces.

Give yourself time.

Plan ahead for bathroom and phone. Pause when entering a dim room or bright sunlight. Rest when first sitting up. Get organized before starting on stairs.



Use only **sturdy step ladders and stools**. Select one with a handle for support.

Equip every bathroom.

Install grab bars by toilet and in tub or shower. Add a non-skid surface to shower floor.

Keep a touch control **light and phone by the bed.**

Assess outside

your home. Add lighting, rails, level uneven surfaces, use your tools, carry your phone.

Stay **alert and aware** of your surroundings.



For further information contact:

Oregon State UNIVERSITY **OSU** Extension Service Washington County

Jeanne Brandt Jeanne.brandt@oregonstate.edu

18640 NW Walker Road #1400, Beaverton OR 97006

<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/washington/index.php>