

Falls and related injuries occur at any age. With a physician's order, Eventide's physical or occupational therapists can evaluate your strength/balance to make recommendations to increase safety in your home.



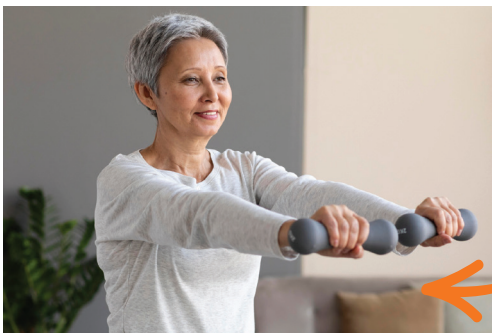
Fall Facts

- > **25% of persons aged 65 to 74**, and a third of those over 75, will report a fall
- > **Falls:**
 - Result in 200,000 hip fractures a year
 - Are often associated with limiting physical and social activities and increasing dependence
 - Can be avoided with simple changes; they are not a normal part of aging
- > **Injury is leading cause of death** among those over age 65



Prevent Falls and Fractures

- > **Have your vision and hearing tested** regularly and properly corrected
- > **Talk to your pharmacist or doctor** about the side effects of drugs you are taking and how they affect your balance and coordination
- > **Use caution in getting up too quickly** after eating or lying down, as low blood pressure may cause dizziness
- > **Use a cane or walker** to help maintain balance on uneven or unfamiliar ground, if you sometimes feel dizzy or short of breath. A physical therapist can assist you in finding a walking aid that's right for you
- > **Wear:**
 - Supportive, rubber-soled, low-heeled shoes
 - Nightgowns and robes that do not drag on the ground



Exercise

- > **Physical activity improves** strength, muscle tone and flexibility
- > **Check with your doctor or physical therapist** about a suitable exercise program

Stairs, Halls and Pathways

- ☐ Provide good lighting and remove clutter.
- ☐ Thick and/or plush carpet with a pad underneath can become loose and a tripping hazard.
- ☐ Consider flat, tightly woven carpet.
- ☐ Remove all throw rugs. Even rugs with non-skid backing can get caught up in walkers and become a tripping hazard.
- ☐ Ensure hand rails are tightly fastened and run the entire length of stairs with light switches at each end.
- ☐ Place night lights in hallways.
- ☐ Outfit pets with reflective collars so they're easily visible in dark walking areas.

Bathrooms

- ☐ Place grab bars in and out of tubs and showers and near toilets. **NEVER** use towel racks as a substitute for grab bars!
- ☐ Plastic or rubber tub mats can lose their suction and pose a tripping hazard. Adhesive safety strips are more secure.

Bedrooms

- ☐ Place night lights or install light switches within reach of bed(s).
- ☐ Have an easy-to-reach telephone. You may want to consider getting a portable phone or use an emergency call service if you are prone to falls.

Living Areas

- ☐ Place electrical cords and telephone wires out of walking paths.
- ☐ Arrange furniture and other objects so they are not in the way. Ensure that couches and chairs are a proper height to get into and out of easily.