Fall Prevention

Ask a family member or friend to help you work through this pamphlet and check off all the ways you can make your home safe and help prevent falls.

Talk to a physiotherapist to see if a mobility aid such as a cane or walker would be right for you. If you have a cane or walker, ask a qualified professional to go over the safety features and set the right height for you.

Stairs

- Install handrails on both sides of your stairs. Make sure the handrail is as long as the stairs.
- Always keep stairs free of clutter.
- If you have stairs, make sure there is a light switch at the top and bottom of the stairs.
- Hire someone or ask a family member to fix loose or uneven steps and handrails.
- Make sure that carpet is firmly attached to the stairs or attach non-slip rubber treads on the stairs if there is no carpet.
- Hire someone or ask a family member to paint your outside steps with a mixture of sand and paint for better grip.
☐ Ask or hire someone to keep your walkways and outside steps clear of snow, ice, newspapers, and leaves.

☐ Always have a light on for your outdoor entrances and stairs.

Kitchen

☐ Keep things you use often in easy reach, either on lower shelves or on the counter. A long-handled reacher can be used to reach lighter items on higher surfaces. Do not climb to reach things.

☐ Plan your meals ahead of time. Think about using a meal delivery program or buy meals that are easy to make.

☐ If you use a walker, a tray attachment makes it easier and safer to carry things around your kitchen.

Bathroom

☐ Talk to your occupational therapist about safety equipment for the bathroom (for example, grab bars, raised toilet seats, bath benches or seats).

☐ Have a non-slip rubber mat or non-slip adhesive strips put in your tub.

☐ If you have a hard time getting in or out of your tub, try sponge-bathing more often or asking for help.
Clothing

☐ Wear non-slip, low-heeled shoes, or slippers that fit well. Do not walk around in socks because they can be more slippery than shoes or slippers with a good sole.

☐ Wear clothes that will not get in the way of walking or moving. Dresses or pants that are too long can get in the way.

In your home

☐ Make sure all areas of your home are well lit.

☐ Have a lamp or light switch near your bed that you can reach easily without getting up. A “touch lamp” is a great idea.

☐ Have a night light in your hallways, bedroom and bathroom.

☐ Keep pathways to all the rooms free of clutter. This is very important if you use a walking aid.

☐ Take out small rugs and mats that are not fixed to the floor.

☐ Keep all electrical wires and telephone cords secured safely out of pathways.
Tips to prevent falls

• Use assistive devices and safety equipment as directed by your occupational therapist.

• Have your eyesight and hearing tested regularly.

• Review all your medications with your healthcare provider and/or pharmacist on a regular basis.

• Exercise regularly to improve your muscle strength, balance and coordination.

• Eat a well-balanced diet.

• Be careful about how much alcohol you drink.

• Get up slowly after lying or sitting down. Take your time to make sure you are not dizzy before standing up.

• Don’t carry large or awkward things that can throw you off balance.

• Have your telephone or cell phone in easy reach. A cordless phone at your bedside is a good idea.

• Keep emergency numbers in large print next to each phone.

• Think about wearing an emergency response button.

For more information about fall prevention, please talk to your occupational therapist or physiotherapist.
Looking for more health information?
Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: http://library.nshealth.ca/PatientGuides
Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.
For more information go to http://library.novascotia.ca

Nova Scotia Health Authority promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.
Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!

Nova Scotia Health Authority
www.nshealth.ca

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.