



# Essentials of Community Risk Reduction

## Preventing Falls Tip Sheet

### Reducing the Risk for Older Adults

#### Pathways

- Make sure pathways are clear of slip and trip hazards. Keep electrical cords, books, shoes, and toys off of the floor.
- Eliminate the use of mats or small throw rugs. Make sure larger rugs have pads or non-skid backing to hold them securely in place even on the edges.
- Keep clutter off stairways.
- Make sure stairways are well-lit from top to bottom. Make sure you can see both the top and bottom steps.
- Have sturdy handrails the full length of the stairs on both sides that are easy to grip.
- Make sure carpet or other floor coverings are securely fastened down.

#### Kitchen

- Store the things you use the most in cabinets within easy reach.
- Use a sturdy step stool with a handle or a grabber when reaching up.

#### Bathroom

- Use non-slip mats in bathtubs and showers.
- Install grab bars in the shower and tub, and next to the toilet.
- Wipe up spills and dry wet surfaces quickly.
- Install a night light in the bathroom and in the hallway leading to the bathroom.

#### Outdoors

- If there is ice or snow, clear your path. Ask for help.
- Use handrails and step slowly and carefully.
- Watch out for uneven pavement and sidewalks.

#### More Ways to Prevent Falls

- Exercise regularly to strengthen legs and improve balance.
- Ask your doctor, pharmacist, or health care provider to evaluate your risk of falling and determine if you need a Vitamin D supplement.
- Review your medicines with your doctor or pharmacist to identify possible side effects that may cause dizziness or drowsiness.
- Have your vision checked once a year and update your eyeglasses if necessary.
- Ensure the shoes you wear will not increase your risk of falling. Sturdy, well-fitting shoes with non-slip soles are best. Thick-soled athletic shoes, high heels, slippers or stocking feet contribute to falls.





# Essentials of Community Risk Reduction

## Reducing the Risk for Young Children

### Furniture

- Use furniture designed to hold a television, such as a television stand or media center and that is anchored to the wall.
- Mount flat-screen TVs on the wall to prevent them from toppling over.
- Remove items from the top of the TV and furniture that might tempt kids to climb, such as toys and remote controls.
- When you are no longer using a CRT television, recycle it.
- Install inexpensive anti-tip brackets, braces and wall strips to anchor existing furniture and televisions. New furniture, such as dressers, is sold with anti-tip devices – install them right away.
- Keep children from climbing on furniture.

### Windows

- In homes with children, install window guards on all second-story or higher windows.
- Install window stops to prevent windows from opening more than 4 inches.
- Purchase window guards with a quick release mechanism. This will allow the window to be opened easily by an adult in the case of a fire emergency.
- Install locks on sliding windows to prevent children from opening them.
- Move all furniture away from windows.
- Do not allow children to play on fire escapes, roofs or balconies.
- Keep windows locked and closed when not in use.
- Create a soft landing, such as bushes or plant beds, under windows.

### Shopping Carts

- Use seatbelts to restrain your child in the cart seat.
- Stay with your child at all times.
- Don't allow your child to ride in the cart basket.
- Don't place a personal infant carrier or car seat in the cart seat or basket.
- Don't allow your child to ride or climb on the sides or front of the cart.
- Don't allow a child to push the cart with another child in it.
- If possible, use shopping carts that have a wheeled child carrier that is permanently attached.

### Playgrounds

- Choose playgrounds that have a shock-absorbing surface around the play equipment.
- Make sure platforms and ramps have guardrails to prevent falls.
- Remove tripping hazards, like exposed concrete footings, tree stumps, and rocks.
- Regularly check play equipment and surfacing to make sure both are in good condition.
- Carefully supervise children on play equipment.

