



## A Focus on Preventing Falls

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**Be safe. Be careful. Watch where you step.** You hear these cautions from family and friends all of the time. But what can you do to be sure that you are indeed being careful and watching and preventing a fall or accident in your home? Below we look at two areas—yourself and your home—where you can be safer and more secure.

### FOR YOU

#### Stay Strong

- Use your muscles. Exercise—even if a short time—every day, if you can.
- Talk with your doctor. Maybe a physical therapy program is right for you.
- Use your walker or cane to walk upright and keep your balance. (Those items are not meant to be a clothes rack.)
- Wear shoes with good support even when walking around the house.

#### Know Your Meds

- Keep a medication list of every medication you take, including over-the-counter medications.
- Know what the medications do for you.

#### Eye Check

- Have regular eye exams.
- If you have glasses, wear them as directed.

### FOR YOUR HOME

#### Things Around the House

- Remove any throw or scatter rugs.
- Any area rugs should have a non-skid bottom.
- **Stairways:**
  - Have handrails on both sides of the stairs.
  - Do not use the stairs as a bookshelf. Keep the stairs clear of items.
- **Bathrooms:**
  - Have a raised toilet seat installed and/or grab bars next to toilet.
  - Have grab bars installed in tub and/or shower.
  - Use non-skid mats in tub and shower.
  - Use only non-skid rugs.
  - Have a shower head that can be raised and lowered.
- **Lighting:**
  - Be sure all lights are in good working condition.
  - Use lights in hallways and stairways, both inside and outside.
  - Have a working lamp next to your bed.
  - Remove lamp cords from your walking area.
- **Walkways:**
  - Stairways and hallways should be open and clear of clutter.
- If you use a step stool, be sure there are handles.

### STAYING CONNECTED

Who:	National Association of Area Agencies on Aging
Why:	Grants for home repairs and safety
Where:	<a href="http://www.n4a.org">www.n4a.org</a>
Who:	AARP
Why:	Comprehensive checklist on home safety
Where:	<a href="http://www.aarp.org">www.aarp.org</a>
Who:	National Institute of Senior Centers
Why:	Online learning and advocacy
Where:	<a href="http://www.ncoa.org/nisc">www.ncoa.org/nisc</a>

**NEW:** To help case managers meet the needs of their culturally diverse patients, the Patient Primer is now available in Spanish at [www.dorlandhealth.com/patient-primer](http://www.dorlandhealth.com/patient-primer). This service is provided by Black Diamond Language Services ([www.blackdiamondservices.net](http://www.blackdiamondservices.net)). If you would like the Primer translated into other languages, please contact Black Diamond (800.685.4789). 