

## WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT FALLS:

### HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES:

- Do a brown bag test: Talk to your Doctor and Pharmacist about the medications you take.

Multiple medications can cause dizziness, drowsiness and balance problems. It is important to have all of your medications reviewed at least once a year by a pharmacist or doctor.

- Tell your Doctor if you are experiencing vision or hearing loss:
  - Have you or those around you noticed a change in your hearing? Dizziness can occur with hearing loss. Set up an appointment to have your hearing checked.
  - Have you or those around you noticed a change in your vision? Seeing obstacles is the first step in avoiding a fall. Keep your glasses clean. Have your eyes examined once a year.
- If you have fallen in the past year (especially if you have fallen two or more times in the last six months) tell your Healthcare Provider and describe how you fell.
- Do you wear floppy slippers or a long bathrobe? Wear well-fitting slippers with non-skid soles. Avoid night clothing that drags on the floor and keep your robe tied.

### ABILITIES:

- Tell your Healthcare Provider if you feel weak in your legs or have any other problems with your legs or feet.
- Do you have trouble:
  - Reaching overhead? Put commonly used things on shelves that are easy to reach. If you must reach overhead, keep a sturdy stool handy.

- Picking up objects from the floor?  
Plan ahead. Move the object closer to something sturdy to hold on to.
- Getting in and out of the bathtub?  
Consider adding grab bars to the walls or using a tub seat to assist with bathing. Non-skid tub mats and a hand held shower can also be useful.
- Getting in and out of a chair?  
Avoid sitting on low furniture. Chairs with arms make it easier to get up.
- Walking without holding on to something?  
If you feel unsteady without holding on to something, you may need an assistive device such as a cane or walker.

#### **IN YOUR HOME:**

- Perform a Home Assessment for safety to include lighting, flooring, and furniture placement.
- Do you have:
  - Throw rugs?  
Throw rugs pose a tripping hazard. They should be tacked down or removed.
  - Stairs without rails?  
Using hand rails to go up and down stairs is easier and safer. Add hand rails to all stairs if possible.
  - Clutter in your walking space?  
Clutter such as shoes, electrical cords and magazines are a safety hazard. Keep pathways clear.
  - Dark hallways or stairwells?  
Good lighting can reduce the chance of falling. Consider adding night- lights where overhead lighting is lacking. Add bright tape strips to the edge of each Stair. Always keep a charged flashlight near your bed for emergencies. A night Light in the bathroom can also make night trips to the bathroom safer.