FALL RISK MANAGEMENT FOR OLDER ADULTS

STAY ON YOUR FEET

ComForCare
HOME CARE

INTRODUCTION

ComForCare Home Care

Call us:
830-632-5887

Visit Our Office:
1281 E. Common St.
New Braunfels, TX 78130

Office Hours:
9:00am – 5:00pm M-F

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STAY ON YOUR FEET

Agenda:

- Risk Factors
- Managing Fall Risk
- Where to begin

WHERE TO BEGIN

Why does it matter?

1. One out of four older people falls each year, but **you don't have to fall.** There are specific things you can do to reduce your chances of falling.

1. Taking steps to prevent yourself from falling sooner rather than later can help you **stay independent**.

> One's belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task
>
> -Albert Bandura

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RISK FACTORS

RISK FACTORS

Quiz

Do you think falling is a normal part of aging?

YES or **NO**?

RISK FACTORS

Answer: NO

Falls are not a normal part of aging and are preventable

People ages 45 - 64 fall at the same rates as those 65 and older.

Those 65+ are at higher risk of an injury due to a fall.

Risks for falls or fall-related injuries can be decreased.

RISK FACTORS

Quiz

True or false, the No. 1 reason why older adults fall is due to poor eyesight?

TRUE or **FALSE**?

RISK FACTORS

Answer: False

Primary reason why older adults fall: decline in strength and mobility

Please note: There are multiple factors that lead to falls.

Stay Independent

Check Your Risk for Falling

Circle "Yes" or "No" for each statement below			Why it matters
Yes (2)	No (0)	I have fallen in the past year.	People who have fallen once are likely to fall again.
Yes (2)	No (0)	I use or have been advised to use a cane or walker to get around safely.	People who have been advised to use a cane or walker may already be more likely to fall.
Yes (1)	No (0)	Sometimes I feel unsteady when I am walking.	Unsteadiness or needing support while walking are signs of poor balance.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I steady myself by holding onto furniture when walking at home.	This is also a sign of poor balance.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I am worried about falling.	People who are worried about falling are more likely to fall.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I need to push with my hands to stand up from a chair.	This is a sign of weak leg muscles, a major reason for falling.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I have some trouble stepping up onto a curb.	This is also a sign of weak leg muscles.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I often have to rush to the toilet.	Rushing to the bathroom, especially at night, increases your chance of falling.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I have lost some feeling in my feet.	Numbness in your feet can cause stumbles and lead to falls.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I take medicine that sometimes makes me feel light-headed or more tired than usual.	Side effects from medicines can sometimes increase your chance of falling.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I take medicine to help me sleep or improve my mood.	These medicines can sometimes increase your chance of falling.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I often feel sad or depressed.	Symptoms of depression, such as not feeling well or feeling slowed down, are linked to falls.

Total _____ Add up the number of points for each "yes" answer. If you scored 4 points or more, you may be at risk for falling. Discuss this brochure with your doctor.

This checklist was developed by the Greater Los Angeles VA Geriatric Research Education Clinical Center and affiliates and is a validated fall risk self-assessment tool (Rubenstein et al. J Safety Res; 2011: 42(6)493-499). Adapted with permission of the authors.

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Stay Independent - What's Your Score?

1. What was your score?

1. Results
   a. >4 - at higher risk
   b. <4 - at lower risk for falls
   c. Questions 1 -7 indicates primary reason for falling is strength and balance
   d. Questions 8 - 12 require medical management

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RISK FACTORS

Risk factors most common to older adults who are frail, institutionalized, or home bound

Incontinence	Urinary Tract Infections Associated With Delirium
Diabetes	Delirium
Change in health status/condition	Nutritional status
Use of Mobility Devices, Walking Aids, Etc.	Environment

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RISK FACTORS

Big Impact Risk Factors for All Older Adults

Depression	Previous Falls
Polypharmacy	High Risk Medications
Poor Balance	**Leg Muscle Weakness**
Fear of Falling	Cognitive Impairment
Visual Impairment	Age
Orthostatic Hypotension	Peripheral Neuropathy
Foot deformities/Footwear	Co-morbidities

RISK FACTORS

What can you manage?

- Home environment
- Strength and balance activities
- Medication usage
- Vision checks
- Proper footwear
- Minimize risk

What can't you manage?

- Age
- Cognitive impairment
- Previous falls

MANAGING FALL RISK

MANAGING FALL RISK

Six main areas to consider

1. Think of falls as a chronic condition
2. Meet with your doctor
3. Medications
4. Home safety tips
5. Vision
6. Get up and go!

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MANAGING FALL RISK

Think of falls as a chronic condition

1. Assess often
2. Complete a fall risk assessment
3. Work with your health care provider for an optimal form of exercise
4. Manage your strength and balance activities
5. Get up slowly and make sure you are aware of depth perception when you sit down

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MANAGING FALL RISK

Meet with your doctor

1. Ask for a Vitamin D deficiency check
2. Talk about how to increase strength and balance
3. Request a fall risk screening
4. Review all medications
5. If you get dizzy when you stand up, bring it up

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MANAGING FALL RISK

Review Medications

1. Review medications that make you lightheaded or dizzy
    a. Medications that increase fall risk include:
        i. Psychoactives and opioids
        ii. Medications that cause confusion/sedation
            1. I.e., Benadryl (diphenhydramine)
        iii. Medications that cause hypotension
        iv. Muscle relaxants
2. Medication changes can increase fall risk
3. Use one pharmacy
4. Consider setting up medications in a pillbox

It is estimated that older adults who take > 8 medications are 21% more likely to fall.[6]

CDC Recommends:

STOP - medications when possible

SWITCH - to safer alternatives

REDUCE - medications to the lowest effective dose

MANAGING FALL RISK

Home safety: Evaluate Your Home Quiz

1. Can you keep throw rugs?
2. Are grab bars required?
3. Are 20 watt light bulbs bright enough?
4. Where is your dry food stored (pantry) and favorite eating dishes/cups?
5. Is the path from your driveway/parked car easy to walk?

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MANAGING FALL RISK

Home Safety Tips

1. Eliminate throw rugs or properly secure them
2. Decrease clutter
3. Ensure your home is properly lit
4. Make sure everyday items are placed on lower level shelves
5. Consider grab bars: inside the bathtub and next to the toilet
6. Use non-slip mats in the bathtub and on shower floors
7. Have handrails and lights installed on all staircases
8. Don't forget about the outside
    a. Steps and walkway from car to home - clear of clutter and even out stairs

MANAGING FALL RISK

Get your vision checked

- Yearly exams encouraged

- If glasses are needed, make sure they're with you at all times!

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MANAGING FALL RISK

Get up and go!

1. Consider exercise that builds lower-extremity strength
2. Low-impact exercise like chair yoga or Tai Chi are great choices
3. Requires daily management to reduce your risk for falls
4. You can reduce your chances of falling by doing strength and balance exercises as little as 3 times a week, and you don't have to overexert yourself to benefit.

Review with your physician before starting any new exercise routine

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WHERE TO BEGIN

WHERE TO BEGIN

1. Managing falls as a chronic condition
2. Meet with your doctor (take results of Stay Independent with you)
3. Have medications reviewed
4. Evaluate your home
5. Get your vision checked
6. Get up and go - consider a low-impact strength and balance exercises

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QUESTIONS?

COMFORCARE IS HERE TO ASSIST

Thank You for Attending!

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