

## 6. Light up your living space

Keep your home brightly lit to avoid tripping on objects that are hard to see. Also:

- Place night lights in your bedroom, bathroom and hallways.
- Place a lamp within reach of your bed for middle-of-the-night needs.
- Make clear paths to light switches that aren't near room entrances. Consider trading traditional switches for glow-in-the-dark or illuminated switches.
- Turn on the lights before going up or down stairs.
- Store flashlights in easy-to-find places in case of power outages.

### Where to find exercises to improve your balance

[www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/fitness/multimedia/balance-exercises/sls-20076853?s=1](http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/fitness/multimedia/balance-exercises/sls-20076853?s=1)

[www.silversneakers.com/blog/fit-for-life-exercises-improve-balance/](http://www.silversneakers.com/blog/fit-for-life-exercises-improve-balance/)

[www.aginginplace.org/top-10-elderly-balance-exercises-to-improve-balance-and-coordination/](http://www.aginginplace.org/top-10-elderly-balance-exercises-to-improve-balance-and-coordination/)



**"The handle on your recliner does not qualify as an exercise machine."**



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### Don't Fall This Fall!

Among older adults, falls are the leading cause of injury, deaths, unintentional injuries, and hospital admissions for trauma. Falls can take a serious toll on older adults' quality of life and independence. In the United States every second, an older adult falls. But there are ways to make sure you are not one of those prone to fall!

Steps to prevent a fall:

1. Talk to your doctor about falls and fall prevention. It is important for you to tell your doctor if you have fallen. Although one out of four older Americans falls each year, less than half tell their doctor.
2. Participate in activities that can improve your balance and strengthen your legs.

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3. Have your eyes checked by an eye doctor once a year and update eye-glasses as needed.
4. Wear sensible shoes.
5. Make your home safer.
6. Light up your living space

Falls are preventable, and there are specific steps anyone can take to help safeguard older Americans so they stay healthy, active, and independent longer.

### 1. Talk to your doctor:

Your doctor may recognize your instability not as “just something that happens as you age” but as a symptom of something else — a blood pressure issue, an inner ear infection, an unexpected reaction to a medication or symptom of something that is easily treatable. It is worth the time to ask and push your doctor for more than a simple “that is just what happens when you age” because often it is a symptom of something else.

### 2. Improve your balance and strength.

Exercise to improve your balance can be very simple. Walking hallways, around rooms, or in the neighborhood strengthen balance and the muscles you need to be stable. Try standing on one foot and writing on the floor the first letters of your first name with the toe of your other foot. Change feet and do it with the other side. Try walking across the room while bobbling your head. It sounds easy, but it is not! Do it slowly, so you won't fall. Any kind of exercise can help.



*“The trouble with today's generation is that they can't stand on their own two feet.”*



### 3. Have your eyes checked.

Eyes change and can be affected by changes in medication. Some glasses, like bifocals and progressives, can make stairs much more challenging. Talk to your eye doctor if lines seem wavy or walking becomes a challenge.

### 4. Wear sensible shoes

Consider changing your footwear as part of your fall-prevention plan. High heels, floppy slippers, and shoes with slick soles can make you slip, stumble, and fall. So can walking in your stocking feet. Instead, wear properly fitting, sturdy shoes with nonskid soles. Sensible shoes may also reduce joint pain.

### 5. Make your home safer.

Take a look around your home. Your living room, kitchen, bedroom, bathroom, hallways and stairways may be filled with hazards. To make your home safer:

- Remove boxes, newspapers, electrical cords and phone cords from walkways.
- Move coffee tables, magazine racks and plant stands from high-traffic areas.
- Secure loose rugs with double-faced tape, tacks or a slip-resistant backing — or remove loose rugs from your home.
- Repair loose, wooden floorboards and carpeting right away.
- Store clothing, dishes, food and other necessities within easy reach.
- Immediately clean spilled liquids, grease or food.
- Use nonslip mats in your bathtub or shower. Use a bath seat, allowing you to sit while showering.