

## What can you do to prevent a fall?

- Ask your doctor about special tests called bone density tests that can determine how strong your bones are. If needed, your doctor can prescribe medication to make your bones stronger so they do not break as easily.
- Talk with your doctor and plan an exercise program that is right for you. Regular exercise helps keep you strong and improves muscle tone. Exercise also helps in keeping your joints, tendons, and muscles flexible. Mild weight bearing exercise, such as walking, light weight training or resistive exercise, may even slow bone loss from osteoporosis.
- Have your vision and hearing tested often. Even slight changes can make you less stable. If your doctor orders new glasses, take time to get used to them and always wear them when you should. If you need hearing aids, wear them and make sure they fit well and are in proper working order.



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# NICHE™

NURSES IMPROVING CARE FOR HEALTHSYSTEM ELDERS



From primary and specialty care to long-term care, Rome Memorial Hospital delivers compassionate medical care for every stage of life. The hospital has earned special designation as a NICHE (Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders) facility for providing compassionate connected care for older adult patients. Specialized education empowers our nurses and healthcare teams to use best practices and strategies for care that is sensitive to the needs of older adult patients.



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# Fall Prevention

Education & Wellness  
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## Falls and Fractures

A simple fall can change your life. Getting older can bring a lot of changes to hearing, sight, muscle strength, coordination, and reflexes. Be aware that medications and health conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, circulation issues and thyroid problems, may cause dizziness and make a fall more likely.

Osteoporosis is a disease that makes bone thin and likely to break more easily. This is a major reason for broken bones in women past menopause. It also affects older men. When your bones are fragile, even a minor fall can cause one or more bones to break.

Take steps to make your home safe and decrease your risk of falling.

Taking the right steps to prevent falls from happening is the only way to prevent serious problems that can develop and cause future complications.



## Take the proper precautions



- Make sure there are light switches at the top and bottom of stairs.
- Keep areas clear of clutter, especially hallways and areas where you walk. Cords and wires should always be kept away from walkways.
- Check that all carpets are fixed firmly to the floor so that they will not slip. Place no-slip strips on tile and wooden flooring. These strips can be purchased at hardware stores. Throw rugs should be avoided.
- Have hand railings on both sides of the stairs from top to bottom and assure that they are tightly fastened.
- Place night lights and light switches close to your bed and keep night lights on.
- Keep your telephone near your bed.
- Mount grab bars near toilets and on both sides of the inside and outside of the tub or shower.
- Place non-skid carpet on all surfaces that may get wet.
- Find out about possible side effects of medications, some may affect coordination or balance. If medications you take have such side effects, talk to your doctor or pharmacist about what you can do to lessen your chances of falling.
- Limit the amount of alcohol you drink. Even small amounts can affect balance and reflexes.
- Stand slowly after eating, lying down or resting. Getting up too quickly can cause blood pressure to drop and make you feel faint.
- Keep your home at a comfortable temperature. During the summer, cool temperatures in the home with a fan or air conditioner. During the winter, keep the temperature at 65 degrees or higher. Drink plenty of liquids and limit exercise on hot days.
- Use a cane, walker or walking stick to help you feel steadier when you walk.
- Footwear should have non-skid soles.
- Have your eyesight checked regularly.