

Balance and Fall Prevention

Every year, more than 30% of U.S. adults 65 and older fall. Falls can lead to a loss of independence, but they are preventable. Consistent changes in your lifestyle will help maximize your safety and independence. On the back of this handout, review the safety checklist when you return to your home environment to try to make some positive changes. Here are some additional helpful tips you can also try to prevent falls.

Five Helpful Tips for Fall Prevention:

- 1. Change in footwear:**
 - One of the first steps to a strong, stable footing is supportive shoes.
- 2. Schedule a Vision Check**
 - Improve vision can decrease the risk of falling
- 3. Keep Moving:**
 - Begin an exercise program to help improve and maintain your leg strength and balance.
- 4. Make your home environment safer:**
 - In your home analyze each room as you read through the safety checklist on the back of this handout. Remove any clutter or tripping hazards. (On back of this sheet, see Home safety tips!)
- 5. Consider an emergency response system**



HOME SAFETY TIPS SHEET

Stairs and Steps (Indoors and Outdoors):

Are there shoes, books, clothes, or other items on the stairs?

- Always keep stairs object free

Are any steps uneven or broken?

- Fix all uneven or broken steps

Is the carpet on the steps loose or torn?

- Make sure the carpet is firmly attached to every step or remove the carpet

Floors:

Do you have any throw rugs?

- Remove all throw rugs

Do you have to walk around furniture when walking through a room?

- Ask someone to help move the furniture so there is a clear path to walk

Do you have to step over or walk around wires or cords?

- Coil or tape all cords and wires to the wall to prevent tripping over them

Kitchen:

Are the items you use often located on high shelves?

- Move items you use often to a lower shelf that is waist high

Is the step stool you use sturdy?

- If you often use a step stool, be sure to get one with a bar to hold on to

Bedroom:

Do you have a hard time reaching the light near your bed?

- Place a lamp close to the bed where it can be easily be reached

Is the path to walk from your bed to the bathroom dark during the night?



411 West Main Street, Suite 3
Northborough, MA 01532
p: 508-393-9000 **f:** 508-393-9525
e: info@flahertyphysicaltherapy.com
w: www.flahertyphysicaltherapy.com

- Place a nightlight wherever needed so that you can easily see where you are walking

Bathroom:

Is your tub or shower have a slippery floor?

- Place a non-slip mat on the floor of the tub or shower

Do you need support when getting in and out of the tub or up from the toilet?

- Place grab bars next to and inside the tub, as well as next to the toilet