

# Catch Yourself

## Simple Steps to Prevent Falls

Your risk of falling **increases** when you have:

- fallen before
- balance problems
- chronic diseases like arthritis
- depression
- hazards in the home
- a lot of medications
- memory problems
- muscle weakness
- problems walking
- vision problems

Reduce your risk of falling and stay independent, healthy, and strong by following the steps below:

### 1. Get a fall risk assessment

- Talk with your doctor about your fall risk, especially if you have any of the conditions listed above.

### 2. Review your medications

- Bring all your medications, vitamins, and supplements to your pharmacist or health professional at least once a year and when there are changes in your health.
- Ask about side effects and interactions, especially if you take 4 or more medications.

### 3. Have your vision checked

- Have your vision and eyeglass prescriptions checked every year by an eye doctor.

### 4. Engage in regular physical activity

- Ask your doctor about the best types of activities for you and make a plan that fits with what you like and what you are able to do.
- Doing strength and balance exercises using your lower body can build your strength, improve your balance and coordination, and reduce your risk of falling.

### 5. Assess your home and make changes for safety

- Use a home safety checklist or talk with a professional (such as an occupational therapist) to look for things inside your home that make you more likely to fall.
- Change your home to make it safer - reduce clutter; improve lighting in rooms, hallways, and stairwells; and install handrails and grab bars.

