Are you at risk?

Stay Independent
Falls are the main reason why older people lose their independence.

Four things you can do to prevent falls:

1. Begin an exercise program to improve your leg strength & balance
2. Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review your medicines
3. Get annual eye check-ups & update your eyeglasses
4. Make your home safer by:
   - Removing clutter & tripping hazards
   - Putting railings on all stairs & adding grab bars in the bathroom
   - Having good lighting, especially on stairs

"It’s not the broken hip, it’s the nursing home I don’t want. I need to be independent, so I take Tai Chi.”
Leonard Jones, age 74

"People who use canes are brave. They can be more independent and enjoy their lives.”
Shirley Warner, age 79

Contact your physician at Knoxville Hospital & Clinics to learn more about how you can prevent falls.

KNOXVILLE Hospital & Clinics
YOUR CORNERSTONE TO HEALTH
1202 West Howard Street
Knoxville, IA 50138
Phone: 641-842-7211

Hours:
Monday-Friday: 7:30 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Saturday: 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Website:
Knoxvillehospital.org

Distributed in partnership with:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Injury Prevention and Control

2015
Check Your Risk for Falling

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

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.

Your doctor may suggest:
- Having other medical tests
- Changing your medicines
- Consulting a specialist
- Seeing a physical therapist
- Attending a fall prevention program

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.