



# CALL, DON'T FALL

## Preventing Falls

### Information for Residents and Families

#### Did you know?

- One in three older adults fall each year and 40 percent of admissions to long term care homes are the result of falls.
- Falls are the sixth leading cause of death in older adults.
- Falling is also the leading cause of injury-related admissions to hospital for those over 65.
- Resident rooms and bathrooms are the most common areas for falls to occur.
- More than one in three falls results in serious injury.

#### Are You At Risk?

Do you:

- have a history of falling?
  - get regular activity?
  - have weakness in your lower legs?
  - have an illness that leaves you unsteady while standing?
  - have difficulty seeing or hearing?
  - have a need to go to the bathroom quickly?
  - get anxious or confused?
  - take multiple medications per day?
  - have an infection?
  - suffer from pain?
  - have difficulty sleeping?
  - have a fear of falling?
  - have arthritis, osteoporosis, dementia and/or depression?
  - eat and drink properly?
  - experience a language barrier?
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- Are you over 65?

# Reducing Your Risk

- Ensure your hearing aides are working, your glasses are the correct prescription and that they are both used when walking.
- Wear non-skid socks or low-heeled footwear that fits properly.
- Try to walk a little every day and participate in the activities offered in your home.
- Eat healthy and nutritious meals. Skipping a meal can make you weak and light headed.
- Discuss the need for a vitamin D and calcium supplement (for bone strength) with your physician.
- Ensure your pain is under control. If it isn't, ask your caregiver for help to relieve it.
- Ensure your room is not cluttered. Remove all items from the floor.
- Have personal items within easy reach (glass, tissues, phone, etc.).
- Use the bathroom hand rails and grab bars.
- Before getting out of bed, sit for a moment to avoid the sudden drop in blood pressure that can make you dizzy.
- Ensure your room is properly lit day and night.
- Call for assistance when you need it.
- Use hip protectors to help prevent hip fractures if you are at risk of a fall (ask your care team for more information).
- Use mobility aides regularly if they have been recommended for you.

# How We Help

- Upon moving into a long term care home, you are assessed for a risk of falling. This assessment will continue on an ongoing basis and your care team will discuss prevention strategies with you and your families to ensure your safety.
- We will provide you and your family with information about falls and preventive measures.
- We provide the proper equipment required to help you walk safely.
- At scheduled care conferences, we will discuss plans to reduce your risk of a fall.

Registered Association of Ontario. Safer Healthcare Now (September 2010). Getting Started Kit, [www.saferhealthcarenow.ca](http://www.saferhealthcarenow.ca)

Registered Nurses Association of Ontario. LTC Tool Kit (2003). Health Education Fact Sheet From Nurses for You.  
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