



# Ask

EVERCARE'S  
CHIEF MEDICAL  
OFFICER



## FALLS PREVENTION AWARENESS



# EVERCARE

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*Evercare wishes to help spread the word and offer useful tips to prevent falls and injuries.*

## IMPORTANT FACTS & FIGURES

- Each year, millions of seniors (those 65 and older) fall
- One in five falls causes a serious injury, such as head trauma (including traumatic brain injuries, known as TBIs) and broken bones (most commonly, hip fractures)
- 2.5 million who experience a fall are treated in emergency departments; 700,000 are hospitalized
- Medical costs for fall injuries: \$34 billion annually

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## CONSEQUENCES OF FALLS

- Fall injuries may make it hard for a person to get around, including those involved with everyday activities. Living alone may be more difficult.
- Many seniors who fall, even if they are not injured, become afraid of falling. This fear may cause a person to cut down on their daily activities, and in turn, may cause them to become weaker and to fall more.

# WHAT CONDITIONS MAKE SENIORS MORE LIKELY TO FALL?

Most falls are caused by a combination of risk factors. However, many risk factors, once identified, can be changed to help prevent falls. Risk factors may include:

- Lower body weakness
- Vitamin D deficiency
- Difficulty in walking caused by foot pain and/or poor footwear
- Vision problems
- Medications such as blood thinners (may increase risk of head and brain injury), blood pressure medications (may cause lightheadedness), tranquilizers, sedatives, antidepressants (all may affect balance and steadiness) & a host of over-the-counter medications
- Home hazards such as unsecured carpets and slippery floors, lack of handrails along stairs or in the bathroom, etc.

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## 4 SIMPLE TIPS TO PREVENT FALLS:

### 1. TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR.

Ask your doctor or healthcare provider to evaluate your fall risk, review your medications, and to advise you about specific things you can do.

### 2. HAVE YOUR EYES CHECKED.

Have your Eye Care Professional check you at least once per year.

### 3. DO STRENGTH AND BALANCE EXERCISES.

Exercise to strengthen your legs and improve your balance. Tai Chi is one fun and effective example.

### 4. MAKE YOUR HOME SAFER.

Get rid of things you can trip over and consider adding grab bars. Also, make sure that you have railings on both sides of your stairs and that your house is well-lit.



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