STAYING INDEPENDENT

Falls are the main reason older adults lose their independence.

ARE YOU AT RISK?
Complete the checklist in this pamphlet and talk to your health care provider about your risk factors.

For more information visit:
- Ontario Seniors Secretariat
  www.seniors.gov.on.ca/en

- Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)

Don’t have a health care provider? Consider registering with Health Care Connect at 1-800-445-1822 or online at www.ontario.ca/healthcareconnect (Have your Ontario Health Card Number ready)

9 steps to stay on your feet and prevent falls:
- Be active
- Walk tall
- Improve your balance
- Care for your feet and use safe footwear
- Manage your health
- Manage your medicines
- Check your eyesight and hearing regularly
- Eat well for life
- Identify, remove and report hazards

For more information on these 9 steps, contact your local public health unit

Algoma Public Health 1-866-892-0172
North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit 1-800-563-2808
Porcupine Health Unit 1-800-461-1818
Sudbury & District Health Unit 1-855-674-4330
Timiskaming Health Unit 1-866-747-4305

Supported by:

Ontario North East Local Health Integration Network

Adapted with permission from the “Stay Independent” brochure from the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention - National Centre for Injury Prevention and Control.
To help stay independent and prevent falls:

Your provider may ask you about:
- previous falls
- if you feel unsteady when you stand or walk
- how you manage your daily activities
- if you are worried about falling

Your provider may ask about your:
- medications
- calcium and vitamin D
- blood pressure, heart rate and rhythm
- muscle strength
- feet and footwear
- bladder control
- vision and hearing
- ability to move around and balance

Your provider may suggest:
- Having other medical tests
- Changing your medicines
- Consulting a specialist
- Seeing a physiotherapist
- Attending an exercise class

---

### Check Your Risk for Falling

**Please circle “YES” or “NO” for each statement below.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes (2)</th>
<th>No (0)</th>
<th><strong>Actions to Staying Independent</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>I have fallen in the past year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>I use or have been advised to use a cane or walker to get around safely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Sometimes, I feel unsteady when I am walking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>I steady myself by holding onto furniture when walking at home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>I am worried about falling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>I need to push with my hands to stand up from a chair.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>I have some trouble stepping up onto a curb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>I often have to rush to the toilet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>I have lost some feeling in my feet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>I take medicines that sometimes make me feel light-headed or more tired than usual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>I take medicine to help me sleep or improve my mood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>I often feel sad or depressed.</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 checklist with your health care provider to find ways to reduce your risk.

---

*The above 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 (Vivrette, Rubenstein, Martin, Josephson & Kramer, 2011). This brochure is adapted with the permission of J.Stevens, R Vivrette, J.Kramer, & L. Rubenstein.*