

Senior *Health & Wellness* Guide

Fall Prevention

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Your Personal Health Record™

This booklet is designed to help you manage your health. It includes special tips on preventing falls. The booklet is divided into two color-coded sections for easy use.

My Health Record, pages 1-8, provides space to list your medications, doctor visits, and results from health tests/screenings.

Keeping Healthy, pages 9-17, includes important information on your health and preventing falls.

Name _____

Home Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

In Case of Emergency, Contact:

Name _____

Home Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Relationship to You _____

My Health Record

Pages in this section are highlighted with green bars. You can record important health information here.

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Health Topics to Review with My Doctor

Talk to your doctor about these health topics at every visit. Take notes to review at home.

Fall Prevention

Tell your doctor if you've fallen, had dizzy spells, or lost your balance. Your doctor can help adjust your medicine, suggest exercises, or give you ideas on making your home safer.

Dates Discussed _____

Notes _____

Medications

Complete the medication list on pages 4 and 5. Bring this booklet to your visit. Tell your doctor if any medications are making you dizzy or giving you other problems.

Dates Discussed _____

Notes _____

Screenings, Tests, Vaccines

Let your doctor know about any health screenings, tests, and vaccines you've had. Find out which ones you may need.

Dates Discussed _____

Notes _____

Physical Health

Diet, an active lifestyle, and proper weight are keys to good health. Find out how you can improve your diet, stay at a healthy weight, and stay active during the year.

Dates Discussed _____

Notes _____

Mental Health

Feeling sad, lonely, or tired for long periods can be signs of depression. Your doctor may have some ideas on how to help you feel better.

Dates Discussed _____

Notes _____

My Medication List

List Your Prescription Medicines

Use a pencil so it's easier to update your list.

Medication Name	What It's For	How Much I Take	When I Take It

List Your Non-Prescription Medications and Vitamins/Herbal Supplements

Include: pain relievers, allergy medicines, antacids, sleeping pills, etc.

(Chart adapted from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and National Institute on Aging.)

My Healthcare Team

List the names and phone numbers of your doctors and other healthcare professionals.

Doctor _____

Phone _____

Specialty _____

Doctor _____

Phone _____

Specialty _____

Doctor _____

Phone _____

Specialty _____

Other Provider _____

Phone _____

Specialty _____

Other Provider _____

Phone _____

Specialty _____

Recent Health Tests and Screenings

List recent tests and screenings here. See pages 14-15 for a list of tests and screenings covered by Medicare.

Test/Screening _____

Date _____

Reason _____

Result _____

Test/Screening _____

Date _____

Reason _____

Result _____

Test/Screening _____

Date _____

Reason _____

Result _____

Test/Screening _____

Date _____

Reason _____

Result _____

Check Your Risk for Falls

If you check four or more boxes, your chance of falling increases. Talk to your doctor about things you can do to prevent falling.

- I have weak legs or ankles.
- I have trouble with balance.
- I take medications that make me dizzy.
- I get dizzy when I stand up.
- I don't see well.
- I have trouble walking.
- I have problems with my feet.
- I have problems finding shoes that fit well.
- I have arthritis.
- I have diabetes.
- I have Parkinson's disease.
- I don't know how to use my cane/walker properly.

(Adapted from CDC's Tool Kit: Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths & Injuries.)

Keeping Healthy

Pages in this section are highlighted with blue bars. You will find useful information here about your health and preventing falls.

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by Medicare 14-15

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Six Steps to Prevent a Fall

The *National Council on Aging* recommends these steps to help you prevent falls:

1 Find a good balance and exercise program

Start an exercise program that includes balance, strength, and flexibility. Contact your local Area Agency on Aging for nearby fall prevention exercise classes (see Eldercare Locator information on page 17). Find a program you like and take a friend.

2 Talk to your doctor

Ask for a test to measure your risk of falling. Share your history of recent falls.

3 Review your medications with your doctor or pharmacist every year

Find out if any medication side effects may increase your risk of falling. Take medications only as prescribed.

4 Get your vision and hearing checked annually. Update your eyeglasses

Healthy eyes and ears are key to helping you stay on your feet.

5 Keep your home safe

Remove tripping hazards, increase lighting, and make stairs safe. Install grab bars in the bathroom.

6 Talk to your family members

Your family can help you take simple steps to make your home safe for everyone.



(Adapted from the National Council on Aging's National Falls Prevention Resource Center. Used with permission.)

Tips to Help Fall-Proof Your Home

You want your home to be a safe haven as you get older. Use this checklist to see what you can do to fall-proof your home.

Floors

- Keep shoes, boxes, books, and magazines off the floor.
- Tack down floor rugs with double-sided tape or non-slip backing.
- Rearrange furniture so you can walk through a room without bumping into anything.
- Dangling wires and cords are dangerous. Coil them or tape them next to the wall.

Stairs and Steps

- Keep stairs free of clutter.
- Install handrails on both sides of the stairs.
- Fix loose or uneven steps.
- Tack down loose carpeting.

Kitchen

- Put items you use often where you can reach them.
- Reach for things more safely using a step stool with a bar you can hold.

Bathroom

- Use non-slip rubber mats or self-stick strips on the shower or tub floor.
- Remove soap scum in the shower or tub.

- Place grab bars in the tub and next to the toilet.
- Use non-skid bathmats near the sink, toilet, and shower or tub.

Lighting

- Install light switches at the top and bottom of stairs.
- Use nightlights in hallways, bathrooms, bedrooms, and stairways.
- Use brighter light bulbs for reading.
- Place lamps on bedside tables where you can easily reach them.
- Add extra lamps in rooms with dark corners.

Closets, Attic, Basement

- Store things where you can get to them easily.
- Replace dim light bulbs with brighter ones.

Outside Your Home

- Repair holes and seams in the sidewalk.
- Hire someone to remove leaves, snow, and ice on stairs and walkways.
- Use handrails on steps.
- Place non-skid fluorescent strips on dark steps.

(Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.)

Preventive Services Covered by Medicare

Talk to your doctor about which tests or screenings you need, and how often. Find out which may require a referral from your doctor.

Note: You may need to pay a portion of the costs for some of these.

- Abdominal aortic aneurysm screening
- Alcohol misuse screening and counseling
- Bone mass measurement
- Breast cancer screening (mammogram)
- Cardiovascular disease (behavioral therapy)
- Cardiovascular disease screenings
- Cervical and vaginal cancer screening
- Colorectal cancer screenings:
 - Fecal occult blood test
 - Flexible sigmoidoscopy
 - Colonoscopy
 - Barium enema
 - Multi-target stool DNA test
- Depression screening
- Diabetes screenings
- Diabetes self-management training

- Flu shots
- Glaucoma tests
- Hepatitis B shots
- Hepatitis C screening test
- HIV screening
- Lung cancer screening
- Medical nutrition therapy services
- Obesity screening and counseling
- Pneumococcal shot
- Prostate cancer screenings
- Sexually transmitted infections screening and counseling
- Tobacco use cessation counseling
- “Welcome to Medicare” preventive visit (one-time)
- Yearly “Wellness” visit

For more about these preventive services,
1-800-633-4227 (TTY: 1-877-486-2048),
or visit www.medicare.gov.

(Source: Medicare)

Resources to Help You Prevent Falls

These websites and phone numbers provide useful information on fall prevention. Visit your library if you don't have Internet access at home.

National Falls Prevention Resource Center — National Council on Aging (NCOA)

www.ncoa.org/FallsPrevention

E-mail: fallsfree@ncoa.org

NCOA manages the Falls Prevention Resource Center. It supports awareness and education on falls. Major activities include:

Falls Free® Initiative — A national education effort on falls and fall-related injuries. NCOA publishes the *Falls Free® National Action Plan* — goals, strategies, and action steps to prevent falls.

National Falls Prevention Awareness Day — An annual event always held on the first day of fall. Fall prevention awareness activities and screenings are held across the U.S.

Eldercare Locator

1-800-677-1116 (TTY: 711)

www.eldercare.gov

This service provides information on your local Area Agency on Aging (AAA). Local AAAs can help you find fall prevention exercise programs in your area. The Eldercare Locator can also help find other local senior services.

National Institute on Aging Information Center

1-800-222-2225 (TTY: 1-800-222-4225)

www.nia.nih.gov/health

www.nihseniorhealth.gov

www.nia.nih.gov/espanol

U.S. Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

www.healthfinder.gov

www.health.gov

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Review Copy