

Preventing Falls at Home

About 60 percent of falls occur at home, and most are preventable. Common hazards include slippery or wet surfaces, cluttered walkways, poor lighting or improper footwear. Potentially serious falls can occur doing everyday activities like climbing stairs, working in the kitchen or using the shower or bathroom. Here is a safety checklist.

- Stairs should be well lit. Outside stairs should use motion detector lights. Inside stairs should have light switches at both the bottom and top of the stairs. Stairs should be free of clutter and ideally covered with a non-slip surface or tightly woven carpet. Install sturdy handrails on both sides of the stairs.
- Bathrooms should have night-lights and non-skid rugs (or non-skid backings). For older adults, there should be handrails in the bathtub and toilet areas.
- In the kitchen, clean up spills quickly and avoid waxing floors. Keep items within easy reach instead of climbing to high shelves. If you must climb, use a sturdy step stool with rails.
- Keep clutter, low tables and cords out of the walkway in rooms, such as bedrooms and living areas.
- Before getting up from bed, sit on the edge for a minute to make sure you are not dizzy.
- The best footwear has low heels and non-skid soles with a snug fit.



See your doctor if you have dizziness or other risk factors for falls. Medical professionals can help you regain your balance.

Source: American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons

For additional advice or consultation on spinal problems, you may request a referral from your primary care physician to the Indiana Spine Group. For details, visit www.indianaspinegroup.com or call (317) 228-7000.

