



FACT: MOST FALLS ARE PREVENTABLE

Myth

Falls are a normal part of aging.

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Falls are the number one cause of accidental death in adults over the age of 65, and the leading cause of disability, loss of independence, hospitalization, and nursing home placement.

There are many reasons why people fall including: weakness, medical problems or medications, rushing to the bathroom, or tripping over cords or throw rugs. Balance problems or muscle weakness also can lead to falls.

If you answer **YES** to any of these questions, you are at risk of falling:

- Have you fallen or nearly fallen in the last three months?
- Are you afraid that you might fall?
- Do you need to use your arms to rise from chairs?



Determine Your Level of Fall Risk in Three Easy Steps

You need a straight-backed chair and a clock with a second hand. If you cannot time yourself, ask someone to do it for you.

1. Sit in the middle of the chair with your feet flat on the floor and your arms folded across your chest.
2. Rise to a full stand and return to a complete sitting position.
3. Count how many times you are able to do this in 30 seconds. If you are on your way up when time is up, count that as one.

High Risk

Call your doctor, or an HCR Home Care Falls Prevention Specialist at **800-270-4904** for instructions on ways to improve your strength. Do these exercises only if you feel safe doing them on your own*.

Your score determines your fall risk level:

- 8 or less times = High Risk**
- 9 to 12 times = Moderate Risk**
- 13 or more times = Low Risk**



Moderate Risk

Do these exercises. Seek assistance from your doctor or HCR if you have difficulties*.

Low Risk

Keep your risk low by doing these exercises!*

EXERCISE TO MINIMIZE YOUR RISK



Exercise #1: Sit to Stand

Targets thighs and buttocks.
Do three to five times each week.

1. Sit in a straight-backed chair with your feet shoulder-width apart. **SLOWLY** rise up to a standing position. Use your hands for support, if necessary.
2. Pause. **SLOWLY** bend your knees and lower yourself toward the chair. If you can't sit all the way down or feel pain or discomfort, place a cushion on the chair or squat down only four to six inches.
3. Repeat 10 times. Rest for one minute. Complete a second set of 10. Too difficult? Start with fewer and build up to 10.



Exercise #2: Side Hip Raise

Targets hip and thigh muscles.
Do three to five times each week.

1. Stand next to a sturdy chair with feet slightly apart and toes facing forward. Keep your legs straight. Place one hand on the back of the chair for support. As you become stronger, hold on to the chair with only one finger.
2. **SLOWLY** lift your left leg out to the side. Keep your leg straight. Only a small amount of movement is necessary.
3. Pause. **SLOWLY** lower your foot back to the ground.
4. Repeat 10 times, then 10 times with your right leg. Rest for one minute. Do a second set of 10 repetitions with each leg.

**Before beginning any exercise program, consult your physician or your physical therapist.*

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