Stay Independent

Falls are the main reason older people lose their independence.

Are YOU at risk?

Four things you can do to prevent falls:

1. Begin an exercise program to improve leg strength and balance.

2. Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review your medicines.

3. Get annual eye check-ups and update your eyeglasses.

4. Make your home safer by:

- Removing clutter and tripping hazards.
- Putting railings on all stairs and adding grab bars in the bathroom.
- Having good lighting, especially on stairs.

Falls Free®

Iowa Falls Prevention Coalition

www.idph.iowa.gov/falls-prevention

Winter Word Search

A B Y R E P P I L S F W E W Z
I Y B H M X R X H Z M D X F Z
C R E H T A E W E R E V E S R
E J S D N I W U S C O L D F A
S Y N D O U C L A N Z C S S E
K W J R G Q E K T A H G F E Y
A Q R G S D E Y E M F B V L W
T M V E D K C T E W A L P C E
I J F I T O I W L O L I S I N
N H N D F N E I S N L Z C C Q
G G A Z S K I I N S R Z F I J
S B A P F W K W V G I A Y X Q
W P M W O N S Z D L S R A W X
R Y L I M A F W H I K D B W V
W X T O M Q Q H O L I D A Y S

Blizzard
Cold
Fall Risk
Family
Holidays
Ice
Ice Skating
Icicles
New Year
Severe Weather
Skiing
Sledding
Sleet
Slippery
Snow
Snowman
Winds
Winter

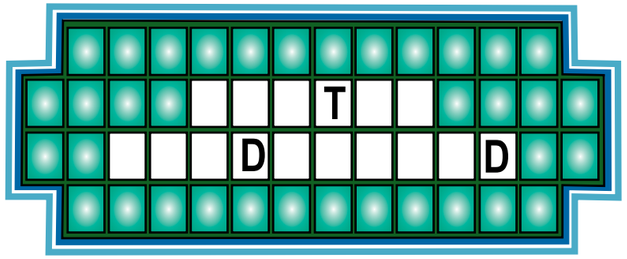
Tips for Winter Walking

- When walking on snow, wear boots with deep treads.
- When walking on ice, use ice cleats over your shoes. Remove once you are indoors.
- Use an ice gripper on your cane, or hiking poles with sharp tips for icy conditions.
- To help with balance, wear gloves, rather than putting hands in pockets.
- Wear bright colored clothing and add reflective tape to your walker or cane.

What to do after a Fall:

- **Stay as calm as possible.** Take a few deep breaths to relax.
- **Remain on the floor for a few moments.** This helps you get over the shock of falling. Getting up too quickly could make an injury worse.
- **If you are injured, get medical assistance.** If you hit your head or experience confusion or severe pain, **call 911**.
- **Even if there are no injuries, discuss the fall with your doctor.** Write down the details. Your doctor can assess whether it is a medical issue or something else to address.

Winter Phrase



HOLIDAY SONG PHRASE

Check Your Risk for Falling

Please circle "Yes" or "No' for each statement below			Why it Matters
Yes (2)	No (0)	I have fallen in the past year.	People who have fallen once are likely to fall again.
Yes (2)	No (0)	I use or have been advised to use a cane or walker to get around safely.	People who have been advised to use a cane or walker may already be more likely to fall.
Yes (1)	No (0)	Sometimes I feel unsteady when I am walking.	Unsteadiness or needing support while walking are signs of poor balance.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I steady myself by holding onto furniture when walking at home.	This is a also a sign of poor balance.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I am worried about falling.	People who are worried about falling are more likely to fall.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I need to push with my hands to stand up from a chair.	This is a sign of weak leg muscles, a major reason for falling.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I have some trouble stepping up onto a curb.	This is also a sign of weak leg muscles.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I often have to rush to the toilet.	Rushing to the bathroom, especially at night, increases your chance of a fall.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I have lost some feeling in my feet.	Numbness in your feet can cause stumbles and lead to falls.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I take medicine that sometimes makes me feel light-headed or more tired than usual.	Side effects from medicines can sometimes increase your chance of failing.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I take medicine to help me sleep or improve my mood.	These medicines can sometimes increase your chance of falling,
Yes (1)	No (0)	I often feel sad or depressed.	Symptoms of depression, such as not feeling well or feeling slowed down, are linked to falls.
Total_____		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 brochure with your doctor.	

This 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 (Rubenstein et al. J Safety Res; 2011: 42(6)493-499). Adapted with permission of the authors.

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Brain Injury Alliance IOWA
www.biaia.org, 855-444-6443

Iowa Department on AGING
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