

# Tips to Avoid Falls

## Inside

- Keep all rooms free from clutter, especially on the floors
- Do not place pet dishes in your walking path
- Keep floor surfaces smooth but not slippery
- Wear supportive, low-heeled shoes
- Avoid walking around in socks, stockings, or scuffs
- Eliminate area rugs when possible. Check that all carpets and other rugs are tacked to the floor, including carpet on stairs
- Be sure that all stairwells are well lit and that stairs have handrails on both side.
- For optimal safety, install grab bars beside tubs, showers, and toilets. Use a rubber bath mat in the shower or tub
- Keep a flashlight with fresh batteries beside your bed. Use night lights to illuminate frequently traveled paths, such as the route from the bedroom to the bathroom
- Use a bag or tray on your walker to carry objects
- Add ceiling fixtures to rooms lit by lamps only, or hook up a lamp that is activated by a switch near the entrance into the room
- Use adequate lighting with at least 100-watt bulbs
- If you must use a stepstool, use a sturdy one with a handrail and wide steps. Reorganize work and storage areas to minimize the need for stooping or excessive reaching.
- Consider using a portable phone that you can take with you from room to room. Pre-program telephone numbers to make contact easier
- Arrange time with a family member or friend for daily contact. Have at least one person who always knows where you are. You may wish to contract a monitoring company such as Evangelical's Lifeline program that will respond to your call 24 hours a day.

## Outside

- Use a walker or cane for added stability
- Wear warm boots with rubber soles for added traction
- If sidewalks look slippery, walk on the grass for better traction
- In winter, sprinkle rock salt or kitty litter on sidewalks or streets that are slippery
- Look carefully at floor surfaces in public buildings.
- When these surfaces are wet, they become slick and dangerous. When floors have plastic or carpet runners in place, stay on them whenever possible