

Fall Risk Checklist For Caregivers



Answer each question with “Yes” or “No” as it applies to your loved one.

Question:

1. Is the person you care for 65 or older?
2. Do they have three or more current health issues that have been diagnosed by a doctor?
3. Have they fallen in the past three months?
4. Have they had any recent incontinence episodes? This includes both daytime and nighttime leakage, as well as trouble making it to the bathroom in time.
5. Does the person you care for have vision problems? If they have a prescription for glasses or contacts, mark yes if they are not always worn around the house.
6. Do they have any difficulty with day-to-day activities such as getting dressed, brushing teeth and hair, bathing, going to the bathroom, or eating or preparing meals? This includes using a cane, walker or wheelchair to move around.
7. Are there dimly lit areas, pets, clutter, or other items in the home that can trip your loved one? This includes missing or dim light bulbs, lamp cords, medical equipment tubes, uneven floors or stairs, items that need a step stool to be retrieved, throw rugs, and anything stacked on the floor.
8. Do they take four or more prescription drugs?
9. Does the person you care for experience any pain with movement? This includes both permanent pain with a specific movement, or pain that comes and goes.
10. Do they have any issues with memory or confused thinking? This includes people who show symptoms of dementia or Alzheimer’s, who are easily confused, or who seem to have poor judgment or memory.

Yes	No
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*If you answered “Yes” to 4 or more questions, your loved one has a high risk of falling. Please refer to the fall prevention tips on the reverse side.

Total Score:
 Yes _____ No _____

Fall Prevention Tips

Every year, one out of every four adults age 65 or older falls. Falls among older adults can cause serious injury or disability, and they are the leading cause of injury death among those 65 and older. Many of these falls are caused by common hazards in the home that are easy to fix. Use this home fall prevention checklist to reduce risk of falls in the home:



Floors

Is there a straight path through each room?

- Rearrange furniture to create a straight path through every room.

Are there throw rugs or area rugs on the floor?

- Use double-sided tape or non-slip rug pads to secure them firmly.

Do you step over or around wires or cords?

- Prevent tripping by coiling or taping cords and wires next to the wall.

Are there objects stacked on the floor?

- Move any papers, books, shoes, boxes, blankets or other objects off the floor.

Stairs

Are there objects stacked on the stairs?

- Keep stairs clear by removing all shoes, books or other objects from the stairs.

Is there any loose or torn carpet on steps?

- Reattach loose carpet, or remove carpeting and attach non-slip safety treads or safety tape instead.

Are there handrails on both sides of the stairs?

- Make sure full-length handrails are firmly attached on both sides of the stairs. Tighten or replace loose hand rails.

Is there a light over the stairway, with light switches at both top and bottom of the stairs?

- Have an electrician install a light over the stairs to keep it well-lit, with light switches at both top and bottom of the stairs, or use night lights in surrounding outlets.

Are the stairs easy to see in low light?

- Paint or tape a contrasting color strip on the top edge of steps to make them easier to see in low light.

Kitchen

Are there commonly-used items on high shelves?

- Rearrange cupboards to keep commonly-used items on easy-to-reach shelves (approximately waist level).

Is there a sturdy step stool available?

- Make sure there is a sturdy step stool available with a bar to hold onto. Never try to use a chair as a step stool.

Bedrooms

Is there a light right next to the bed?

- Move a lamp close to the bedside, so that there is a light within easy reach.

Is there a lit pathway between the bed and the bathroom at night?

- Add night lights or glow-in-the-dark tape to light the way to the bathroom at night.

Bathrooms

Are there non-skid shower mats or safety treads in the showers or tubs?

- Add a non-slip rubber mat or non-skid strips to the shower or tub floor.

Are there secure grab bars to help maneuver in and out of the tub, or up from the toilet?

- Have a professional install grab bars next to the toilet and inside the tub or shower.

Other Household Tips

Is the house brightly lit?

- Replace low-watt light bulbs with fluorescent or bright white bulbs. Motion-sensing or touch-switch lights can also help.

Are shoes worn inside and outside the home?

- Wear shoes at home whenever possible. Going barefoot, or wearing socks or slippers, increases fall risk.

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