

IN-HOME SAFETY CHECK: REDUCING FALL RISK

Review the following questions carefully. For best results, correct the items you have checked off. Helpful hints to help reduce your risk of falling are included. *Always remember – falls can be prevented!*

Do you have...

- Unsafe stairs?**
 - Repair broken or worn steps.
 - Keep steps free of clutter.
- Broken or missing railings?**
 - Repair or install handrails on stairs, if possible.
- Poor lighting?**
 - To help visibility in stairwells, bright strips of tape to the edge of each stair where you should not step.
 - Consider adding night-lights where overhead lighting is lacking.
 - A night light in the bathroom can also make night trips to the bathroom easier.
 - Always keep a charged flashlight near your bed for emergencies.
- Throw rugs?**
 - These are a tripping hazard. If you do not wish to remove them, they should be securely fastened to the ground with an adhesive, double-stick tape.
- Clutter?**
 - Shoes, electrical cords, and magazines can be hazardous in walkways. Always keep walkways clear.
- Regularly used items out of reach?**
 - Put regularly used items on shelves within easy reach between hip and eye level.
 - A long-handled grabber can be used to reach objects that are on high shelves or on the floor.
- Spills that go un-wiped?**
 - Spills on the floor can be dangerous. It is best to wipe up spills as soon as they happen.
- An unsafe bathroom?**
 - If you bathe in the shower, consider installing a non-skid shower chair and hand-held shower head so you can sit while bathing.
 - Avoid pulling up on the sink to get up from the toilet or bathtub. Bathroom sinks are generally not securely fastened to the wall and floor, and are not intended to support your weight.
 - Install grab bars or handrails in the shower, on the walls around the bathtub, and alongside the toilet, where necessary.
- Furniture that is difficult to get on and off of?**
 - Try to sit on furniture with good back support that you can get into and out of easily. Firm chairs with armrests are easier to get out of.
 - Add pillows to the back of chairs so that your feet can touch the floor.
- An inaccessible phone?**
 - Use a cordless home phone, or rely on your cellphone if possible. Keep your phone near you.
 - In case you trip and fall, help is only a phone call away. Keep emergency numbers readily available.

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of potential fall risks. Please treat this checklist as a starting point. Contact your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions, or need help making changes.

Additional Resources

Stay on Your Feet Booklet | Parkinson Society BC | bit.ly/pdstayonyourfeet

Balance and Falling Helpsheet | Parkinson Society BC | bit.ly/pdbalanceandfalling

Bathroom Safety Helpsheet | Parkinson Society BC | bit.ly/pdbalanceandfalling

Assistive Devices & Home Adaptations Helpsheet | Parkinson Society BC | bit.ly/pdhomeadaptation

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This checklist was developed by S.A.F.E. (Students Against Falls in the Elderly), Roberta Newton, PhD, Temple University.

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