



Advanced Life Support, Transport and Resources
Provided by W.C.A. Services Corporation

Preventing Slips and Falls

1. **Preventing Slips And Falls With A Little Common Sense:**

Accidents do happen; however, most slips and falls could and should have been prevented. The key to preventing most slips and falls are following some simple common sense tips.

Take the time to identify, control and eliminate the hazards around your home to lower your chances of slips and falls.

2. **Preventing Slips And Falls In The Living Room:**

- Clear clutter off the floor. (pick up newspapers, books, shoes, toys, magazines, etc.)
- Use care around low furniture. (coffee tables, ottomans, etc.)
- Anchor loose telephone, computer and electrical cords.
- **Secure or avoid area throw rugs.** (especially those used over linoleum, wood or tile flooring, or those that curl up on the ends)
- Repair bulges in carpeting.
- Take extra care with changes in floor surface. (such as when carpet meets tile floors)

3. **Preventing Slips And Falls In The Kitchen:**

- Wipe up spills immediately.
- Use a sturdy step stool (not a chair), when you need to reach up into those top kitchen cupboards.
- Use reacher aids to access those high shelves.
- Keep kitchen drawers and cabinets closed.
- Use a non-skid rug in front of the sink.
- Do not over wax or polish your floors.

4. **Preventing Slips And Falls In The Bathroom:**

- Install actual grab bars by the toilet, shower and tub. (note: towel racks, soap dishes etc. are not designed to hold a person's weight)
- Use extra care around soapy water.
- Soft-water can make showering very slippery.
- Use a shower chair and handheld showerhead if prone to falling.
- Use non-skid bath mats by the shower and sink. (they help absorb splashes)
- Use rubber mats or slip resistant stickers in the bathtub.
- Quickly clean up puddles.

5. Preventing Slips And Falls In The Bedroom:

- Close your dresser drawers.
- **Before getting up out of bed, always take time to sit on the edge of the bed to make sure you are not feeling light-headed or dizzy.**
- Wear proper fitting clothing, you can trip over coats, pant legs or bathrobes that are too long.

6. Preventing Slips And Falls With Proper Shoes And Footwear:

- Shoes and footwear should fit properly.
- Choose shoes with low heels and good tread, whenever possible.
- Soles and heels of shoes should provide good "traction" and be slip-resistant. (Note: traction is the force, measured in terms of quality of surface friction, that allows you to walk without slipping)
- Avoid shoes with shoelaces.

7. Preventing Slips And Falls While Walking:

- Slow it down, take your time.
- Don't rush to get the front door or answer the telephone.
- Use a cane or walker if you feel unsteady.
- Keep all assistive devices in good repair. (replace worn rubber tips, etc.)
- Use care when walking on surfaces that can make it difficult to maintain your footing. (such as: loose rocks, uneven floors or broken sidewalks)
- Watch where you're walking.
- Avoid distractions, stay focused on what you're doing.

8. Preventing Slips And Falls On Stairs And Steps:

- Always keep steps and staircases clear.
- Install sturdy handrails on both sides, if you can.
- Add non-slip safety treads to steps.
- Always keep one hand free to be able to use the handrail.
- Never carry items that obstruct your view of the next step.
- Don't overload yourself. (carry smaller, lighter loads and/or make extra trips)
- Take your time to decrease chances of misjudging a step.

9. Preventing Slips And Falls With Better Vision And Light:

- Turn on the lights! (you can easily miss an unknown object lurking in the darkness)
- Use nightlights.
- Wear your glasses if you need them.
- Have your vision checked regularly by an eye doctor. (you may have vision changes and/or problems such as cataracts)
- Don't wear sunglasses indoors.
- Give your eyes a chance to adjust. (going from light to dark areas, or vice versa, can cause temporary vision problems)