

Taking Steps to

Prevent Falls



**Mark Rivera,
Health Net**

*We help protect the health
of our communities.*



Health Net®



Each year, one in every three seniors will fall. You may be more likely to fall if you have an injury, illness, poor vision, trouble with balance, or are taking certain medications. Falls can lead to serious injuries and even death among seniors.

Preventing falls is important for your safety, health and well-being.

Falls can be prevented by taking the following steps:

1. Create a safe and secure home.
2. Stay physically active.
3. See your doctor every year for vision and hearing checks.
4. Take your medications as directed.

Protect yourself and reduce your risk for falls

- Have someone check on you daily and keep a list of emergency numbers near all phones.
- Always have a way to call for help and a phone or cell phone handy. Talk with your doctor about a home alert system.
- Wear shoes or slippers with backs, non-skid soles and good support.
- Use devices like bedside toilets, canes, walkers, wheelchairs, or scooters if you need them.
- Stay physically active to improve strength and balance. This will help reduce your chances of falling. Try walking, chair exercises, dancing, yoga or tai chi to stay fit.
- Eat and drink water throughout the day.
- Rise slowly after eating or sleeping to avoid dizziness.



**Deanna Washington,
Health Net**

We help you make informed health decisions.

Create a safe and secure home

All rooms

- Have clear pathways in all areas of the home.
- Remove all clutter and cords from hallways and high-traffic areas.
- Use non-skid floor wax on all floors.
- Use nightlights in hallways, bedrooms, bathrooms, and stairways.

Kitchen

- Keep dishes and food items within easy reach to avoid using a stepstool.
- Wipe up spills immediately.

Bathrooms

- Remove soap buildup in tubs and showers. Place non-slip strips in the tub and shower. Secure bathmats with double-sided tape.
- Install raised toilet seats, shower chairs, and adjustable-height or hand-held showerheads if needed.
- Mount grab bars on both sides of the toilet, bath and shower walls.

Bedrooms

- Place a lamp and telephone with emergency numbers near your bed.

Hallways and stairs (inside and outside of your home)

- Install handrails on both sides of stairways inside and outside of the home.
- Install light switches at the top and bottom of stairs.
- Install handrails and lights around porches and steps outside of the home.



Secure all rugs with tacks, non-skid pads or double-sided rug tape.



Work with your doctor to prevent falls

- Review with your doctor all prescription and over-the-counter medications that you are taking. Understand how and when to take your medications. Share with your doctor any medication side effects you have.
- Tell your doctor if you have fallen in the past six months, felt dizzy or weak, or have a hard time walking, getting out of bed or keeping your balance.
- Check your vision every year to detect conditions that could impair sight and possibly cause a fall.
- Check your hearing every year as ear problems may affect balance and cause falls.



Call your doctor if you:

- Feel lightheaded or dizzy more than once a day.
- Lose your balance often or feel unsteady on your feet.
- Feel numbness in your feet or legs.
- Notice a change in the way you walk.
- Have a steady decline in your memory or mental ability.

Cal MediConnect Members:

To learn more, call the Health Education Information Line at **1-800-804-6074 (TTY: 711)**.

To speak with a nurse about your health or to learn more about online wellness programs, call the Member Services number on the back of your ID card or visit **www.healthnet.com/calmediconnect**.

This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Please always follow your health care provider's instructions. Programs and services are subject to change.

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