Stay on Your Feet:

How to reduce your risk of falling

Falls happen every day and are particularly devastating for older adults. They are the number one cause of injury-related deaths and hospitalizations in BC.

The number one reason why seniors fall is due to inactivity. Talk to your doctor before beginning an exercise program that includes strength and balance training in your routines.

Medications can increase your risk of falling.

- Talk to your doctor or pharmacist if you think your medications are making you dizzy or drowsy.
- Be especially careful when you are starting a new medication as the side effects may be worse at the beginning.
- Avoid sleeping pills. Instead, practice good sleep habits (go to bed at the same time each night, avoid napping during the day, and get outside and move each day so that your body is tired in the evening).

Other tips to prevent falls:

- Reduce clutter inside your home, especially on the floors and stairs.
- Take your car keys with you when you are working outside – if you fall, you can press the car alarm on the key fob to summon help.
- Avoid using ladders or step stools. Move things down to where you can reach them and/or ask a neighbour, family member or friend for assistance.
- Use handrails and remove your reading glasses when going up and down stairs.
- Wear comfortable low-heeled shoes or sandals with an ankle strap that provide good support, even in the house.
- Eat healthy foods every day – poor nutrition can cause dizziness.
- Drink lots of water throughout the day, especially in the heat! It is easy to become dehydrated, which can cause dizziness and falls.
- Be mindful of where you put your feet and stay alert to your surroundings when you are walking, especially on stairs and sidewalks.
- Have your vision checked each year. Always wear your glasses and hearing aids.
- Consider using a walker or cane to help with getting around. Talk to a Community Physiotherapist or Occupational Therapist first to make sure you buy the right walking aid for you.

For more information about fall and injury prevention, visit the fall prevention site *www.findingbalancebc.ca* and the Your Health section at *www.interiorhealth.ca.*

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Interior Health Lifeline Program

A not-for-profit, hospital based, community supported program, providing home emergency response monitoring services to seniors, the medically at risk, and physically challenged individuals.
Lifeline - a caring connection which promotes safety and independence.

South Okanagan **250-770-3531/1-866-755-6111**

www.lifeline.ca

Interior Health
Every person matters