

# HOW TO PREVENT FALLS

An injury from a fall can limit an older person's ability to lead an active, independent life. Each year, thousands of older men and women are disabled by falls in the home. One third of those age 65 or older suffer one or more falls a year; half of those who fall will fall again! The older you are, the higher the likelihood of falling.

Making simple changes in the home or personal practices can prevent many falls.

## **Tips for Preventing Falls**

- Exercise at least 20 minutes daily. Start with slow exercises once a day and increase the pace and intensity gradually to three or four days a week. Exercises such as walking, taichi and yoga can increase your energy level, lift your mood, and enhance your fitness, flexibility and balance.
- Store regularly used appliances within easy reach. Do not climb or bend too low to get things.
- Wear comfortable, firm fitting, flat shoes with low broad heel and soles that grip. Do not rush to and from one point to another, take your time.
- Know what medication you are taking and their side-effects. Get your doctor to review and advise which of your medications can affect your alertness or balance.
- Fall-proof your home. Install good lighting, reduce glare and install grab bars and non-slip tiles or mats in toilets and where slippery surfaces can be found. Remove things

that will cause you to trip such as loose rugs, loose electrical wiring, etc.

- See your doctor if you have a medical condition.

### **Tips on What to Do If You are Alone When You Fall**

- Don't panic.
- Stay calm.
- Decide whether you can get up by yourself.
- If you cannot, shout for help if you can or grab an object within easy reach and bang it to make loud noises to attract attention for help.
- It is always best to have a phone by your side, it is your lifeline.
- See your GP afterwards for all falls, even if you have not hurt yourself, because all falls are potentially serious and need advice or treatment.

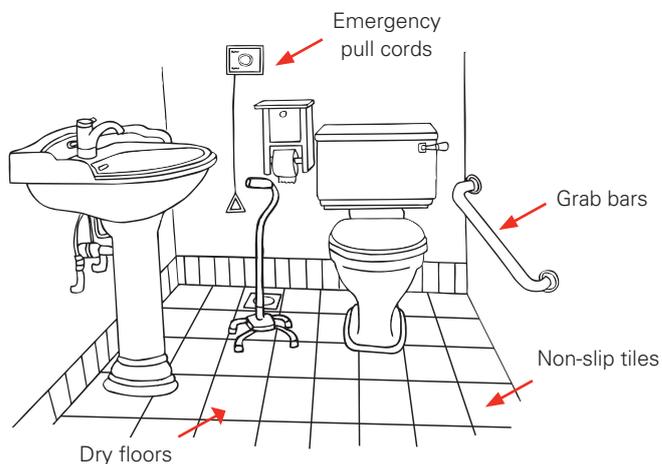
### **Tips on What to Do If I Find Someone Who Has Fallen**

- Stay calm.
- Check that the person is breathing and conscious (if not, call for help and ring for an ambulance immediately).
- Reassure the person (if conscious).
- If you think they have broken any bones – don't move them.
- Get help and call for an ambulance if necessary.

## MODIFY YOUR BATHROOM



**Before**



**After**

Modify your bathroom to reduce fall hazards, install grab bars, improve lighting, and remove items that can cause you to trip.