

After a disabling fall...  
the longer you wait for help...  
the greater the risk of serious  
complications and even death.



Lifeline, the leading personal  
response service, ensures that  
help is available at the press  
of a button, 24-hours-a-day,  
365-days-a-year.

Studies confirm...getting help  
quickly after a fall reduces risk of:

- Hospitalization by 26%<sup>2</sup>
- Death by over 82%<sup>3</sup>

And, Lifeline subscribers were 10 times  
less likely to require admission to a  
nursing home.<sup>4</sup>

For more information on the  
Lifeline service, call

2. Roush RE, Teasdale TA, Murphy JN, Kirk MS. Impact of a personal emergency response system on hospital utilization by community-residing elders. *South Med J*. 1995;88:917-922. 3. Gurley RJ, Lum N, Lo B, Katz MH. Persons found in their homes helpless or dead. *N Engl J Med*. 1996;334:1710-1716. 4. Ruchlin HS, Morris JN. Cost-benefit analysis of an emergency alarm and response system: a case study of a long-term care program. *Health Services Res*. 1981;16(1):65-80.

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## The Fall Prevention Checklist



This folder is brought to you  
as an educational service of



Nearly one third of all people  
over the age of 65 fall each year,  
and that figure increases to  
50% by age 80.

For seniors, falls in and around the  
home are the most frequently occurring  
accident.

In fact, falls are the seventh leading  
cause of death in people over the  
age of 65.

A recent study in  
*The New England  
Journal of  
Medicine* found  
that...

preventing  
falls and the  
resulting  
injuries can  
reduce or  
delay the need  
to move to a  
long-term care  
facility.<sup>1</sup>



1. Tinetti ME, Williams CS. Falls, injuries due to falls, and the risk of admission to a nursing home. *N Engl J Med*. 1997;337:1279-1284.

There are two major  
causes of falls in and  
around the home:

Health- and age-related  
changes,

such as:

- The use of certain medications
- Slow reflexes
- Poor eyesight
- Problems with balance

Hazardous situations  
in the home,

such as:

- Slippery floors
- Inadequate lighting
- Electrical cords in pathways
- Loose rugs
- Raised thresholds
- Clutter

Most falls in the home occur in  
bathrooms, bedrooms and on stairs.

The following  
**Fall Prevention Checklist**  
is designed to help you minimize the  
risk of falling in your home.

# The Lifeline Fall Prevention Checklist

- Have a lamp or light switch that you can easily reach without getting out of bed.
- Use night-lights in the bedroom, bathroom and hallways.
- Keep a flashlight handy.
- Have light switches at both ends of stairs and halls. Install handrails on both sides of stairs.
- Turn on the lights when you go into the house at night.
- Add grab bars in shower, tub and toilet areas.
- Use bath mats with suction cups.
- Use nonslip adhesive strips or a mat in shower or tub.
- Consider sitting on a bench or stool in the shower.
- Consider using an elevated toilet seat.

- Wear nonslip, low-heeled shoes or slippers that fit snugly. Don't walk around in stocking feet.
- Remove all extraneous clutter in house.
- Keep telephone and electrical cords out of pathways.
- Tack rugs and glue vinyl flooring so they lie flat. Remove or replace rugs or runners that tend to slip, or attach nonslip backing.
- Make certain that carpets are firmly attached to the stairs.
- Use helping devices, such as canes, when necessary.



- Purchase a step stool with high and sturdy handrails. Repair or discard wobbly step stools. Do not stand on a chair to reach things. Store frequently used objects where you can reach them easily.
- Paint the edges of outdoor steps and any steps that are especially narrow or are higher or lower than the rest.
- Paint outside stairs with a mixture of sand and paint for better traction. Keep outdoor walkways clear and well lighted.
- Keep snow and ice cleared from entrances and sidewalks.
- Review medications with your doctor or pharmacist. Some drugs, including over-the-counter drugs, can make you drowsy, dizzy and unsteady.
- Watch your alcohol intake. More than two drinks per day can cause unsteadiness.

- Have your hearing and eyesight tested. Inner ear problems can affect balance. Vision problems make it difficult to see potential hazards.
- Exercise regularly to improve muscle flexibility and strength.
- If you feel dizzy or light-headed, sit down or stay seated until your head clears. Stand up slowly to avoid unsteadiness.

