

# USE THIS CHECKLIST TO MINIMIZE FALL RISK

Falls can occur anywhere in your home.

The following checklist is designed to help individuals minimize the risk of falling in their home.

## Outside Your Home

- Paint the edges 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 lit.
- Clear snow and ice from entrances and sidewalks.

## Inside Your Home

- Remove all extraneous clutter in your 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 a non-slip backing.
- Ensure that carpets are firmly attached to the stairs.
- Do not stand on a chair to reach things. Store frequently used objects where you can reach them easily.

## Keep a Well Lit Home

- 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 enter the house at night.

## Bathroom Tips

- Add grab bars in shower, tub and toilet areas.
- Use nonslip adhesive strips or a mat in the shower or tub.
- Consider sitting on a bench or stool in the shower.
- Consider using an elevated toilet seat.

## User Care When Walking

- Use helping devices, such as canes as directed by your healthcare provider.
- Wear nonslip, low-heeled shoes or slippers that fit snugly. Avoid walking around in stocking feet.

## And don't forget...

- Review medications with your doctor or pharmacist. Some drugs (including over the counter) can make you drowsy, dizzy and unsteady.
- Discuss safe amounts of alcohol intake with your physician.
- 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, strength, and balance. Talk to your healthcare professional about exercise programs that are right for you.
- If you feel dizzy or light headed, sit down or stay seated until your head clears. Stand up slowly to avoid unsteadiness.