

Easy Home Modifications TO PREVENT FALLS

Install Handrails

along indoor and outdoor staircases, hallways, and anywhere you feel you need a little extra support.



Use nonslip mats and treads

to help improve traction on bathroom floors, shower, bathtub, outside decks, and outside steps.



Falls are the leading cause of injuries among older adults, sending more than two million people to the emergency department each year.



Improve lighting.

Make sure you have adequate lighting in hallways, stairways, and outdoor walkways, and areas in which you're likely to walk in the middle of the night.



Install grab bars

near showers, bathtubs, and toilets. Avoid grab bars that "stick on" to shower tiles with suction, which are less reliable than metal grab bars attached to wall studs.



Many of the fall hazards are right in our own homes, and a few inexpensive changes could lower your fall-risk.



Inexpensive fixes.

Remove all floor clutter. Rearrange furniture so that it works well with the flow of traffic. Use double-sided tape to secure the edges of area rugs to the floor, and remove small throw rugs.



Repair steps and flooring.

Repair crumbling outdoor steps, loose wall-to-wall carpeting, and uneven floorboards. Call a handyman to repair stairs or floorboards, or a carpet store to come and tighten wall-to-wall carpeting.



For other strategies and tips to avoid falls, check out *"Preventing Falls,"* the online guide from Harvard Medical School.

www.health.harvard.edu/fall