PREVENTING FALLS AT HOME

What can I do to prevent a fall?

- Ask for help, when needed
- Wear non-skid socks or shoes that do not slide off your feet, avoiding shoes with slick soles or high heels.
- Get up slowly when sitting or lying so you will not lose your balance. Avoid quick sudden movements.
- Use a cane or a walker as instructed by your Provider or Physical Therapist
- Ensure your bed is easy to get in and out of. Use a firm chair with arms for sitting so you can get up and down easier.
- Keep your phone and emergency numbers within easy reach. Place the items you use often at waist level for easy reach. If you must use a foot stool to reach items, ensure it has a bar to hold onto.
- Ensure children or pets are not underfoot.
- Ask your Provider or Pharmacist if any of your medicines may increase your risk to fall.
- Have annual eye exam.
- Eat healthy food. Limit alcohol intake.
- Stay as physically active as possible. Exercise will help you to get stronger and improve your balance
- For children, keep crib rails up at all times. Never leave a small child unattended or turn your back on them especially when using a changing table or high chair.

What changes should I make to my home?

- Clear floors and stairs of clutter such as books, clothes, shoes, furniture, wires or cords. Remove throw rugs or tape them securely to the floor so they will not slide.
- Keep floors dry and clean up spills promptly. Avoid floor polish or wax that makes floors slick.
- Have good lighting in hallways, stairways, bathrooms and bedrooms. Have a lamp in an easy to reach location next to bed. Use nightlights. Use bright light bulbs.
- Repair loose or uneven steps or carpet to decrease the risk of losing your balance.
- Use handrails to walk up and down stairs. Place contrasting color strips on the first and last step. Add color or contrast paint/tape to grab bars or handrails.
- Use non-slip mats or decals and/or a shower seat in the tub or shower. Avoid showers with raised ledges to avoid tripping. Install and use grab bars in your shower or tub and near the toilet.
- For small children, install gates at top and bottom of stairs.

What changes can I make to the outdoors?

- Repair the cracks and uneven edges of walkways and driveways. Remove high doorway thresholds.
- Clear walkways of tools, debris, and clutter. Maintain good lighting on your porch, patio or walkways.
- Check that handrails are on both sides of steps and are securely fastened and not broken.
- Use sand or salt on walkways during icy weather conditions.
- Clean up grease or oil spills in your garage.

What should I tell my provider during my appointment?

- Tell your Provider if you have fallen since your last appointment.
- Tell your Provider if you have had numbness/tingling in arms or legs.
- Tell your Provider if you are scared of needles or get dizzy when you see blood or needles.
- Bring a current list of all the medicines you are taking.