

Safety For Seniors

Fall Prevention Tips

The following information provides some practical suggestions to help prevent falls in the elderly.

Getting Out of Bed:

- Lie on your back with both knees bent and feet flat.
- Roll onto your side towards the direction you will get out of bed.
- Bring your legs forward over the edge of the bed and lower them as you push your body.

Getting From Sitting To Standing:

- Scoot to the edge of the bed/chair.
- Place the stronger leg slightly in back of the weaker leg.
- Place hands on armrests or on the edge of the bed.
- Lean trunk forward and press down on arms to stand up.
- If it is a very deep, try rocking a few times to get some momentum before attempting to stand.

Stairs:

- Going up: Go up with the stronger leg first, then bring the weaker leg onto the same step, then cane (if you use one).
- Going down: Go down with weaker leg first then lower and stronger leg onto the same step. If you use a cane, it should go down first.
- Use a handrail when available.

Hills:

- Going up: lead with the stronger leg.
- Going down: lead with the weaker leg.
- Attempt going sideways if the hill is steep.
- Walk down hill in a diagonal manner, similar to switchbacks.

Getting Up From The Floor:

- Get into kneeling position. Bring one foot in front to a half kneeling position; then rise to a standing position. You may need to push down on a sturdy object, e.g. a chair, beside you to stand up.

Assistive Devices:

Cane:

- With can tip four inches in front and four inches to the side, the can handle should come up to your hip joint. The can may need to be shorter for your elbow to bend about twenty degrees.
- When using a cane, always hold it in the opposite hand than your involved side.

Walker:

- Adjust height as with cane (see above).
- Place walker firmly on ground with all four legs in contact with floor.
- Keep walker within comfortable arms distance with elbows slightly bent. Stand tall and avoid walking bent over.