

Healthy Homes

Tips for Older Adults

OLDER ADULTS

Older Americans want to be active and healthy. Chronic illnesses and injuries, especially falls, are common among older adults. These can limit daily activities and reduce quality of life.

Falls threaten the lives, independence, and health of adults aged 65 years and older. In the United States, one in three older adults falls each year. There are ways to prevent falls and help older adults live better and longer.



Chronic illnesses and falls are also an economic burden because of long-term illness and increased health care costs. Although the risk for disease and disability increases with age, poor health is not a necessary part of aging.

Much of the illness, disability, and death resulting from chronic disease is avoidable. Prevention includes living a healthy lifestyle, such as regular exercise and healthy eating; receiving recommended vaccinations against diseases such as flu, pneumonia, and shingles; and using early screening tests, such as screening for breast, cervical, and colorectal cancers.

HEALTH AND SAFETY TIPS

- ▶ Increase your physical activity around the home, such as household chores and heavy gardening (digging, shoveling). (<http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/olderadults.html>)
- ▶ Improve your diet by having a variety of fruits and vegetables in the home for healthier snacks and meals. (<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/>)
- ▶ Make your home safer to prevent falls. (http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/toolkit/Falls_ToolKit/DesktopPDF/English/brochure_Eng_desktop.pdf)
- ▶ Get vaccinated. Both children and adults need immunizations. Check with your doctor or nurse to see what shots you and your family might need. (<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/schedules/adult-schedule.htm>)
- ▶ Have a personalized emergency plan listing where to go in an emergency, how to get there, what to bring (such as medications, eyeglasses, hearing aids and extra batteries, oxygen, or assistive technologies), and who to call for help. (http://www.cdc.gov/aging/pdf/disaster_planning_tips.pdf)

IMPORTANT LINKS

- ▶ Healthy Aging for Older Adults (<http://www.cdc.gov/aging/>)
- ▶ Preventing Falls Among Older Adults (<http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/duip/preventadultfalls.htm>)
- ▶ Health Information and Resources for Older Adults (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services) (<http://www.hhs.gov/aging/>)
- ▶ Disaster Preparedness for Older Americans (U.S. Department of Homeland Security) (<http://www.ready.gov/america/getakit/seniors.html>)

