

FALL PREVENTION

How does what I take or what I drink affect my risk of falling?

Did You Know?

- Falls are the 6th leading cause of death.
- Falls are the most common cause of injury and hospital admission for trauma among older adults.
- Every year, one out of every three adults over the age of 65 falls.
- Having a fall can affect your independence, your mobility and your quality of life.

Alcohol and Falls

As we grow older, we need to be more aware of how alcohol affects us. Aging causes us to become more sensitive to alcohol. Alcohol can also have an effect on medical conditions or interact with our medications. Using alcohol can increase the risk of falling. Talk to your doctor and your pharmacist about your medication and alcohol.

Check This Out!

Take our quiz to find out if you are at a higher risk of having a fall.

- Do you drink alcohol?
- Do you take 4 or more prescription medications?
- Do you have certain medical conditions, like high blood pressure or diabetes?
- Do you use recreational drugs?
- Do you take over-the-counter medications, vitamins, minerals and other natural and herbal products?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, you may be at a higher risk of having a fall. Read on to find out more!



Medication and the Risk of Falling

Medications have the potential to cause unwanted side effects and some of these side effects such as drowsiness, dizziness and decreases in blood pressure or blood sugar can increase the risk of falling. This table lists some examples of medications that may increase the risk of falling.

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| Anxiety Medications | Lorazepam, Clonazepam |
| Anti-Convulsants | Carbamazepine, Topiramate, Valproic Acid |
| Anti-Nauseants | Metoclopramide, Dimenhydrinate |
| Blood Pressure Medications | Ramipril, Lisinopril, Terazosin |
| Cough, Cold and Allergy Medications | Diphenhydramine, Chlorpheniramine, Cetirizine |
| Diabetic Medications | Glyburide, Gliclazide, Insulin |
| Mental Health Medications | Citalopram, Venlafaxine, Olanzapine, Quetiapine, Risperidone |
| Muscle Relaxants | Cyclobenzaprine, Baclofen, Methocarbamol |
| Narcotic Pain Medications | Codeine, Oxycodone, Tramadol |
| Nerve Pain Medications | Gabapentin, Duloxetine, Amitriptyline |
| Prostate Medications | Tamsulosin, Alfuzosin |
| Sleep Medications | Zopiclone, Trazodone |
| Herbal Medications | Valerian, Melatonin, St. John's Wort |
| Alcohol | |
| Marijuana | |

What can I do to Prevent a Fall?

If you take medications or substances listed in the table above, there are some easy ways you can reduce your risk of falls and injury.

- Check your blood pressure regularly.
- Check your blood sugar regularly.
- Avoid drinking if you are alone.
- Avoid drinking if you require the use of a cane or walker or have visual impairment.
- Tell your doctor and your pharmacist about previous falls.
- Tell your doctor and your pharmacist about all medications you take, including over-the-counter medications, vitamins, minerals and other natural and herbal products.
- Discuss any side effects of your medications with your doctor and your pharmacist.

If you have any questions, always ask your doctor and your pharmacist!



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