

The Sensitive Side of Falls

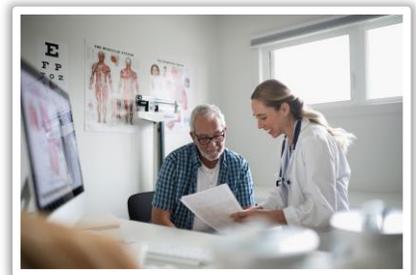
In 2018, Wisconsin had the highest rate of death from older adult falls in the country.
How can you protect yourself?



I have fallen recently, and I am afraid to tell my family.

Discussing falls and our risk for falling can be difficult but talking about falls and our risk for falling is very important. It is okay if you are not ready to discuss falls with your family, but please speak openly and honestly with your doctor about your safety and any falls you may have had. Your doctor can help provide ways to decrease your fall risk as well as assess your medications.

If you are unable review your medications with your doctor at this time there are other options available, including an online service to review your medication list with a pharmacist, through the Pharmacy Association of Wisconsin. If you are interested in this online service, please reach out to Helene McDowell by phone at 608-827-9200 or email at helenem@pswi.org.



Does your home increase your risk of falls?

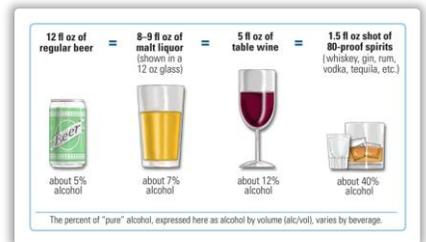
In this packet of information, you will find several suggestions of ways to reduce the fall hazards within your home. In Dane County, you can request a FREE home safety assessment if you are over the age of 60. Contact the Safe at Home program at 608-223-7970 for information. It might also be worth considering that there are only so many ways in which we can modify our homes. It is important to consider whether the physical structure of your home poses a significant fall risk, such as steep stairs, narrow hallways, or uneven floors. It is possible that you may be safer and happier in a new living situation without these obstacles.



Is alcohol increasing your risk of falls?

Alcohol use can play a significant role in falls. As we age the effect of alcohol is greater on our bodies and it can interact poorly with certain medications. Discussing your alcohol use with your doctor is highly recommended.

What is a “safe” level of alcohol use? We can’t be sure what level of alcohol use is safe for everyone, but the general recommendation for adults is not to exceed 1 standard drink per day for women or 2 standard drinks per day for men.



Are your pets increasing your fall risk?

Our pets bring so much joy into our lives, however they can pose a fall risk if you frequently find them underfoot. It is important to consider whether it is truly safe to keep our pets at home, or what safety measures can be put in place. As an example, kenneling/isolating your pets at night could limit trip hazards during evening walks to the restroom, but your doctor may have other suggestions.

