



Preventing Falls and Injuries

Staying Safe in Your New Home



CS-PIER-0083

Healthy People, Healthy Saskatchewan

The Saskatchewan Health Authority works in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, acknowledging Saskatchewan as the traditional territory of First Nations and Métis People.

PIER—Patient Information and Education Resource

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[saskhealthauthority.ca](https://www.saskhealthauthority.ca)

Facts about Falls

What is a fall?

The Saskatchewan Health Authority defines a fall as any unintentional change in position where the person ends up on the floor, ground, or other lower level, with or without an injury. This includes falls that occur while being assisted by others.

What is a near fall?

A near fall is a sudden loss of balance that does not result in a fall. This can include a person who slips, stumbles, or trips but is able to regain control prior to falling.

Why should I be concerned about falls?

Falls are the leading cause of injury in older adults. One in three older adults fall each year. Fifty percent of residents living in long term care homes may experience a fall this year. Falls may lead to injuries, confusion, depression, immobility, loss of independence, and fear of falling again. Injuries from falls can lead to hospitalization and rapid decline in functioning and health, often leading to death. Near falls can be a sign of an increased risk of future falls, but there are things that can be done to help prevent falls.

The most common areas for falls are resident rooms and bathrooms.

Together we will reduce the risk of falls and fall-related injuries!

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Notes

References and bibliography available upon request

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Notes

Care Team Support

- Your care team will frequently check your risk of falling while you live here.
- Your care team will provide information about falls, fall-related injuries, equipment, and make referrals to help you move safely.
- At scheduled care conferences, you and your care team will work together to make a plan to reduce your risk of falls and fall-related injuries.
- Consult your care team to discuss your Vitamin D and Calcium needs.

Vitamin D plays a role in reducing falls amongst the elderly in long term care by increasing muscle strength, bone strength and improving balance.

Calcium helps to keep bones strong which reduces the risk of injury following a fall, especially for those residents with osteoporosis.

If you see a falling star...

The falling star symbol identifies that a resident is at high risk for falling. If you notice them struggling with their balance, please notify the care team immediately.



If you see a night icon...

The night icon identifies residents that are up often during the night and are at a higher risk of falling. Staff will check on these residents more frequently during the night to ensure they are safe.



There may be posters displayed in the home that explain the meaning of the above icons.

How Residents and their Support Persons can Help

- Keep bedrooms, bathrooms, and floors uncluttered.
- Wear well-fitting footwear when you are not in bed. The best shoes are flat with enclosed heels and rubber soles.
- Non-slip socks are safer than regular socks and bare feet. Ask your care team for more information.
- Keep your most personal items within easy reach.
- Use recommended mobility aids. Do not use furniture to support yourself.
- Eat healthy and nutritious meals and drink plenty of fluids.
- Ensure your pain is under control. If it is not, ask your care team for help.
- Participate in strengthening or balance exercises if you are capable. If you can, try to walk every day.
- Ensure eyewear and hearing aids are well maintained and the correct prescription.
- Support the use of falls prevention and injury reduction items such as hip protectors, non-slip socks, alarms, fall mats, etc.
- Be open to medication reviews and changes aimed at reducing fall risk.

For more information about fall prevention and resident safety, please speak with your Healthcare Provider

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Care Team Support

Call, don't fall!



Please use your call bell for assistance!

- Please ring for your care team if you need help to move. We may be a moment, but we **will** be there to help you.
- Call your care team if your room is not safe to walk in, for example if there are spills or objects in your path.
- If it is dark, turn on a light or use a night light.
- Sit up in bed for a minute before you stand up. Standing up too quickly can make you dizzy.
- Ensure you have your balance before you start to walk.
- If you have a walking aid or wheelchair, make sure to use it at all times. Ensure that it is within reach and that the brakes are on when moving to and from your bed.
- Use the bathroom handrails and grab bars.

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