

## Contrast Your Environment

Creating color contrasts in your home helps visual perception and decreases your risk of falls. Which is easier to see?



These glasses

or



these glasses?

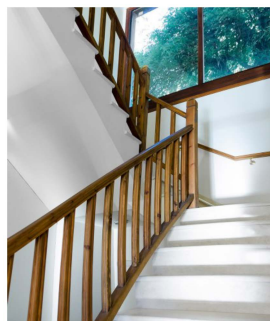


This door...



or this door?

This stair railing...



or this stair railing?



# Fall Prevention Guide

Be safe. Take and use these tips to help you stay on your feet and keep from getting hurt.



Developed by Mountain-Pacific Quality Health, the Medicare Quality Innovation Network-Quality Improvement Organization (QIN-QIO) for Montana, Wyoming, Alaska, Hawaii and the U.S. Pacific Territories of Guam and American Samoa and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, under contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Contents presented do not necessarily reflect CMS policy. 11SOW-MPQHF-WY-B1-18- 02 Updated December 2023

## Quick Tips for Preventing Falls

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- ♦ Decrease or eliminate noise. Noise can be a distraction.
- ♦ Talk to your doctor about reducing any unnecessary medications.
- ♦ Increase your physical activities. Find ways to move and limit sitting activities.
- ♦ Do exercises that improve your balance.
- ♦ Get a good night's rest.
- ♦ Create color contrasts around the house for better visual perception.
- ♦ Make sure you wear appropriate footwear.
- ♦ Reduce the number of floor mats you have or remove them all together.
- ♦ Make sure your bed and chairs are the right height. Sit on the edge of your bed or sit in a chair. Your feet should be flat on the floor, and your knees should be slightly lower than your hips.



## Improving Your Balance

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Your posture, range of motion, strength, reaction time, vision, hearing and the way you feel sensations all contribute to your balance and risk for falls. Here are some exercises to help improve balance:

- ♦ Stand on one foot near a chair, table or counter.
- ♦ Walk heel-toe with your arms extended at your sides, so your body forms a "T."
- ♦ Carefully try to reach for things to stretch your arms, such as a towel at the sink, a tissue on the side table or a snack on a shelf.
- ♦ If you have a wheelchair, use your arms or legs to move.

## Choosing Footwear

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- ♦ Do not wear "gripper" socks on carpets and rugs. No crepe soles.
- ♦ Wear shoes that enclose your feet. No open-back or open-toed shoes or slippers.
- ♦ Make sure your shoes fit correctly.
- ♦ Buy footwear that contrasts with the floors of your home.

## The Problem with Floor Mats

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Mats create an uneven surface, which makes for a fall or tripping hazard. Remove all the mats in your home, if possible. If you feel you need a mat, follow these safety tips:

- ♦ Buy a mat with slip-resistant backing or use double-sided tape to stick the mat to the floor.
- ♦ Get a mat that contrasts with the color of the floor so you can easily see its edges.