



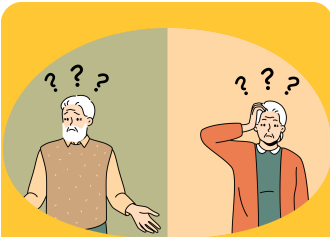
# FALLS PREVENTION

## RISK FACTORS FOR SENIORS



### BIOLOGICAL

- Related to natural aging process and health conditions – some can't be changed, others can be prevented or compensated
  - Difficulty moving or walking
  - Advanced age
  - Gender - higher risk for women
  - Long-term health problems, disabilities and acute illnesses



### BEHAVIOURAL

- Include actions, emotions or choices of the individual:
  - History of falls
  - Fear of falling
  - Medications, Fall-Risk-Increasing Drugs (FRIDs)
  - Excessive alcohol
  - Risk-taking behaviours
  - Lack of exercise
  - Footwear
  - Clothing
  - Use of assistive devices
  - Poor nutrition or hydration
  - Lack of sleep



### SOCIAL/ ECONOMIC

- **Social factors:**
  - Lack of social support networks & transportation, language barriers, culture and ethnicity
- **Economic factors:**
  - Low income = lack of access to health services; unsafe environments, exposure to disease and dangerous habits, muscle weakness or ill health; less able to afford proper footwear, assistive devices and home repairs



### ENVIRONMENTAL

- Home hazards
- Community hazards
- Public building hazards
- Stairs



# FALLS PREVENTION

A QUICK COMPREHENSIVE MODEL FOR SENIORS



- Successful fall and injury prevention actions require all participants (clients, staff and facilitators) to utilize self learning strategy to support and sustain behaviour change

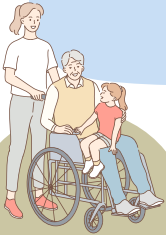
## BEHAVIOUR

- Purpose for fall prevention:
  - Increase awareness about nature and importance of issue
  - Increase understanding prevention is possible
  - Promote learning about effective strategies



## EDUCATION

- Some equipment that are helpful in preventing falls and injuries: Personal electronic alarms and ID bracelets, mobility aids, bathroom and bedroom aids, hip protectors



## EQUIPMENT

- Learning and adopting new behaviours concerning environmental hazards is a strategy for reducing fall risk
- Locations and recommendations for reducing fall risk: Indoor, outdoor, public places, lighting, flooring, stairs



## ENVIRONMENT

- **Physical activity:** Reduces risk of falling among community-dwelling seniors
  - Focus on training for balance, gait, muscle strength, flexibility, endurance or coordination
- **Social activity:** Being social connected is known to improve quality of life and health outcomes



## ACTIVITY

- **Clothes:** Should be relatively loose and easy to put on – helps prevent loss of balance while dressing
- **Shoes:** Should be properly fitted



## CLOTHING/ FOOTWEAR



## HEALTH

## MANAGEMENT

- Strategies for good health management, include: Annual medical assessment, vision test, medication review and modification; Referral to appropriate specialists/other health care professionals; Good sleep habits; Vitamin D and Calcium supplements; Healthy nutrition and hydration; Chronic disease self-management



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**Vancouver Coastal Health**





# FALLS PREVENTION

## EXERCISES FOR SENIORS

### Letters in the air

**\*Increases foot and ankle strength**

1. Make a letter "A" in the air with one leg. Rest.
2. Repeat with other leg. Rest.
3. Continue with the next letters and try to do the whole alphabet.



### Back leg raises

**\*Increases bottom and lower back strength**

1. Stand behind a chair, hands on the top and slowly lift your leg. Hold for 1 second then gently bring leg down
2. Repeat 10 times on each leg



## STRENGTH & BALANCE TRAINING

### Side leg raises

**\*Improves balance**

1. Stand behind a chair with feet slightly apart.
2. Slowly lift leg to side, then slowly lower. Repeat 10-15 times per leg.



### Lunges

**\*Strengthens muscles and corrects imbalances**

1. Stand next to a counter. Step forward with one leg (keep both legs bent).
2. Step back to starting position. Do 5 times. Switch directions and repeat on other leg



### Walking heel to toe

**\*Strengthens legs**

1. Put right foot in front of left foot so the heel of your right foot touches the top of the toes of your left foot.
2. Move left foot in front of right foot, putting your weight in your heel. Shift your weight to your toes. Repeat the step with your left foot.
3. Walk this way for 20 steps.



### Marching in place

**\*Improves balance**

1. Stand in front of a counter and hold on with both hands.
2. March on the spot for 10 seconds. Rest.
3. Repeat for another 10 seconds.



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**SOUTH VANCOUVER  
NEIGHBOURHOOD  
HOUSE**





# FALLS PREVENTION

## HOME HAZARDS LOCATIONS & TIPS FOR SENIORS



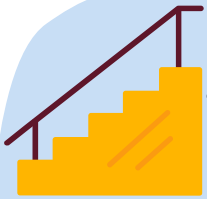
### Doors

- Ensure there is minimal resistance



### Bathroom

- Install grab bars in the shower, tub and by the toilet



### Stairs

- Geometry: All steps should be the same height and width
- Visibility: Light switches at top and bottom of stairs
- Handrails: Easy to grip and should extend beyond the first and last step

### Furniture

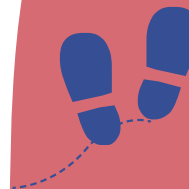
- Should be stable and the appropriate height



### Lighting

- Adequate for those with low vision
- Non-glare
- Easily accessible switches, including touch lights, night lights and motion detector light
- Ensure entrances are well lit

### Paths/Walkways/Flooring



- Should be level and clear of obstructions, obstacles and slip hazards
- Flooring should also be non-slip