



# Stand Tall, Don't Fall

Winnebago County Fall Prevention Resource Guide

# Falling Is A Big Deal



## Age in Place, Stay in Place

- Falls are the second leading cause of death in Wisconsin and the first cause of hospitalization.
  - Falling is not a natural part of aging and many falls are preventable.
  - 1 in 3 people over the age 65 fall each year.
  - Reducing the risk for falls helps older adults gain independence and improve quality of life.
- 
- Evidence-based programs designed to address a complex range of risks have reduced falls (Stepping On, Strong Bones and Tai Chi).
  - Everyone has a role in preventing falls including: families, primary care clinics, pharmacies, rehabilitation clinics, vision care facilities, foot care clinics, emergency departments and even the local community can provide support.

### To Do

- Manage your health from head to toe
- Take the Rate Your Risk Quiz
- Take the Older Adult Depression Quiz
- Talk to your Health Care Provider about falls
- Make your living environment safe

Falling Is A Big Deal

## Rate Your Risk Quiz

### Check Your Risk For Falling



Please circle "Yes" or "No" for each statement below

- Yes (2) No (0) I have fallen in the last 6 months  
**Why It Matters** People who have fallen once are likely to fall again
- Yes (2) No (0) I use or have been advised to use a cane or walker to get around safely  
**Why It Matters** People who have been advised to use a cane or walker may already be more likely to fall
- Yes (1) No (0) Sometimes I feel unsteady when I am walking  
**Why It Matters** Unsteadiness or needing support while walking are signs of poor balance
- Yes (1) No (0) I steady myself by holding onto furniture when walking at home  
**Why It Matters** This is also a sign of poor balance
- Yes (1) No (0) I am worried about falling  
**Why It Matters** People who are worried about falling are more likely to fall

- Yes (1) No (0) I need to push with my hands to stand up from a chair  
**Why It Matters** This is a sign of weak leg muscles, a major reason for falling
- Yes (1) No (0) I have some trouble stepping up onto a curb  
**Why It Matters** This is also a sign of weak leg muscles
- Yes (1) No (0) I often have to rush to the toilet  
**Why It Matters** Rushing to the bathroom, especially at night, increases your chance of falling
- Yes (1) No (0) I have lost some feeling in my feet  
**Why It Matters** Numbness in your feet can cause stumbles and lead to falls
- Yes (1) No (0) I take medicine that sometimes makes me feel light headed or more tired than usual  
**Why It Matters** Side effects from medicines can sometimes increase your chance of falling
- Yes (1) No (0) I take medicine to help me sleep or improve my mood  
**Why It Matters** These medicines can sometimes increase your chance of falling
- Yes (1) No (0) I often feel sad or depressed  
**Why It Matters** Symptoms of depression, such as not feeling well or feeling slowed down, are linked to falls

**Total** \_\_\_\_\_ Add up the number of points for each "yes" answer. If you scored 4 points or more, you may be at risk for falling. Discuss this quiz with your doctor.

This checklist was developed by the Greater Los Angeles VA Geriatric Research Education Clinical Center and affiliates and is a validated fall risk self-assessment tool (Rubenstein et al. J Safety Res; 2011;42(6):493-499). Adapted with permission of the authors.

## Rate Your Risk Quiz

## Pills & Spills

# DON'T LET PILLS BRING YOU DOWN

- Falls often occur due to medication mismanagement.
- People that take four or more medications are at an increased risk of falling.
- Certain types of medications increase your risk of falling.
- Dispose of unused medications at your local Police Departments.
  - Fox Crossing • Neenah
  - Menasha • Oshkosh
- Talk with your Health Care Provider before starting **ANY** new medications.

### To Do

- Talk with your Pharmacist about your medications and schedule a free personal medication review
- Talk with your Pharmacy about packaging options and to establish a routine
- Carry a list of your current supplements, over-the-counter and prescription medications
- Ask your Pharmacist about potential side effects and drug interactions

## TIPS FOR MEDICATION SAFETY



KEEP A LIST OF CURRENT MEDICATIONS



STORE MEDICATION IN ORIGINAL CONTAINER



SET UP A ROUTINE



DISCUSS SIDE EFFECTS



AVOID DRINKING ALCOHOL WHILE ON MEDICATION



USE ONE PHARMACY

## Brain Health



### Everyone Needs a Check-Up From the Neck Up

- Research has shown those with any degree of depression were up to 70% more likely to have multiple falls and injury than those who are not depressed.
- We take care of our physical health. We see a Health Care Provider if we have a physical injury, chest pain or breathing problem. It is just as important to take care of our brain and our mental health.

#### To Do

- Keep active even if you do not feel like it!
- Be Wise: Exercise & Socialize
- See your Health Care Provider for an assessment
- Know the resources in your community  
Winnebago County Crisis Hotline Number:  
(920) 233-7707 or (920) 720-7707  
Suicide Hotline: 800-273-8255  
Winnebago County Behavioral Health:  
(920) 236-4600 or (920) 727-2882  
Aging and Disabilities Resource Center  
(877) 886-2372 / [www.co.winnebago.wi.us/adrc](http://www.co.winnebago.wi.us/adrc)

### Older Adult Depression Quiz

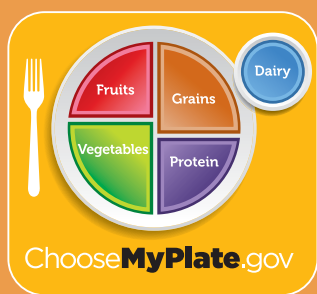
Choose the best answer for how you have felt over the past week:

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| 1. Are you basically satisfied with your life?                                | Yes / No |
| 2. Have you dropped many of your activities and interests?                    | Yes / No |
| 3. Do you feel that your life is empty?                                       | Yes / No |
| 4. Do you often get bored?  | Yes / No |
| 5. Are you in good spirits most of the time?                                  | Yes / No |
| 6. Are you afraid that something bad is going to happen to you?               | Yes / No |
| 7. Do you feel happy most of the time?  | Yes / No |
| 8. Do you often feel helpless?  | Yes / No |
| 9. Do you prefer to stay at home, rather than going out and doing new things? | Yes / No |
| 10. Do you feel you have more problems with memory than most?                 | Yes / No |
| 11. Do you think it is wonderful to be alive now?                             | Yes / No |
| 12. Do you feel pretty worthless the way you are now?                         | Yes / No |
| 13. Do you feel full of energy?   | Yes / No |
| 14. Do you feel that your situation is hopeless?                              | Yes / No |
| 15. Do you think that most people are better off than you are?                | Yes / No |

Count number of answers in red. Total \_\_\_\_\_. Score > 5 points is suggestive of depression.  
Make an appointment to see your Health Care Provider now and bring this with you.

## Brain Health

# Nutrition & Hydration



Poor nutrition can result in loss of muscle mass. Muscle loss often leads to diminished strength and decreased activity levels. This can contribute to mobility issues, osteoporosis, frailty, and loss of physical function and independence.

Use this graphic as a reference to assist with your daily nutritional choices.



• Make half your plate fruits and vegetables

• Any vegetable or 100% vegetable juice counts

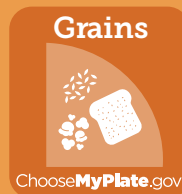
• Eat more red, orange and dark green vegetables



• Make half your plate fruits and vegetables

• Buy fruits that are fresh, frozen, canned or dried or 100% juice

• Add fruit to meals as side dishes or desserts



• Substitute whole grains for refined ones, such as brown rice instead of white rice

• Look for the words 100% whole grain or 100% whole wheat on the food label



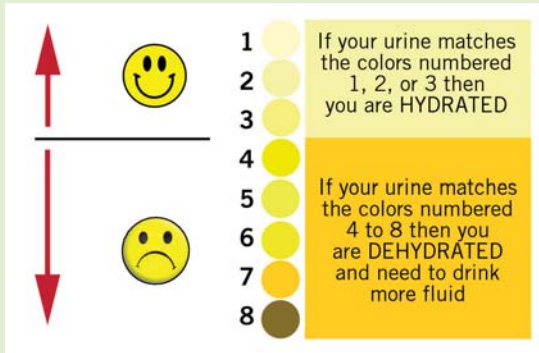
• Eat a variety of protein-rich foods, such as lean beef, poultry, eggs, fish, beans, peas, nuts and soy

• Go lean by choosing beef cuts with the words round or loin on the label



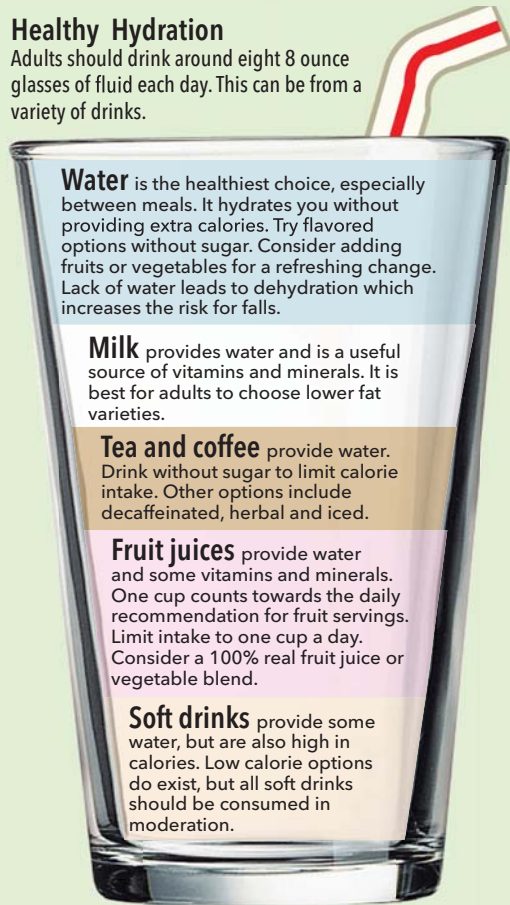
• Switch to low-fat or fat-free milk, yogurt and other milk products

• If you are lactose intolerant, try lactose-free milk or fortified soy milk



### Healthy Hydration

Adults should drink around eight 8 ounce glasses of fluid each day. This can be from a variety of drinks.



**Water** is the healthiest choice, especially between meals. It hydrates you without providing extra calories. Try flavored options without sugar. Consider adding fruits or vegetables for a refreshing change. Lack of water leads to dehydration which increases the risk for falls.

**Milk** provides water and is a useful source of vitamins and minerals. It is best for adults to choose lower fat varieties.

**Tea and coffee** provide water. Drink without sugar to limit calorie intake. Other options include decaffeinated, herbal and iced.

**Fruit juices** provide water and some vitamins and minerals. One cup counts towards the daily recommendation for fruit servings. Limit intake to one cup a day. Consider a 100% real fruit juice or vegetable blend.

**Soft drinks** provide some water, but are also high in calories. Low calorie options do exist, but all soft drinks should be consumed in moderation.

### To Do

- Visit [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov) for tips, ideas and recipes
- Contact the Aging and Disabilities Resource Center of Winnebago County at (877) 886-2372 to learn more about food pantries, SHARE programs, meal sites and home delivered meal options
- Discuss Vitamin D and Calcium recommendations with your Health Care Provider

# Healthy from Head to Toe

## Vision

People with visual impairments are more than twice as likely to fall as people without visual impairments.



### Vision Loss Recommendations

- Have your vision checked every one to two years
- Wear glasses and update regularly
- Scan ahead for hazards
- Improve lighting by installing brighter bulbs
- Wear sunglasses to protect the eye from UV rays and cut down on glare
- By painting a contrasting color or adding a contrasting strip on the top edge of your steps you will be able to see the stairs better
- Contact the local Office for the Blind and Visually Impaired for information & referral services at [www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/blind](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/blind) or call: (920) 831-2090
- Consider attending the Visually Impaired Persons (VIP) Support Group at Oshkosh Seniors Center: (920) 232-5300

## Hearing

Untreated hearing loss has been linked to an increased likelihood of falls. People with even a mild hearing loss were nearly three times more likely to have a history of falling. If you check any boxes below you should schedule an appointment with your Health Care Provider.



### Hearing Loss Checklist

- Do you frequently ask people to repeat themselves?
- When in a group, do you find it difficult to keep up with the conversation?
- Do you often complain about others mumbling or not speaking clearly?
- Do you have difficulty understanding what someone else is saying when you are in a crowded place?
- Do others complain that you have the volume of your TV or radio turned up way too high?



- Are you sometimes embarrassed to find you've responded inappropriately to what someone else has said?
- Do you find it harder to understand people when you are not face-to-face with them?
- Do you find yourself concentrating extra hard when talking to someone on the telephone?
- Have you been in any environments that exposed you to very loud sounds?

## Incontinence

Problems with urine control, also known as incontinence can happen to anyone at any age and can contribute to a risk of falling. Although common, incontinence should not be considered as normal. If you check any of the boxes below you should schedule an appointment with your Health Care Provider.



### Incontinence Checklist

- Do you have problems not making it to the bathroom in time?
- Do you feel as though your bladder is never empty?
- Are you constantly getting up in the middle of the night to use the bathroom?
- Have you altered your activity level due to fear of an accident in public?
- Do you leak urine when you sneeze, cough, laugh or simply stand-up from a sitting position?

## Foot & Nail Care

Problems with your feet such as corns and calluses can change the way you walk and throw off your balance. Long toenails can get caught in socks which rip off the toenail leading to infections. Any foot or nail problem can affect your balance or even keep you from moving around.



### Foot & Nail Care Recommendations

- Shoes worn indoors are your safest bet. Do not walk in bare feet or stocking feet.
- Keep one pair of shoes just for indoors
- Wear sturdy, well-fitted low heel/flat shoes that tie or velcro. Avoid loose fitting slippers.
- See your Health Care Provider if you have pain, calluses, corns, decreased sensation in your feet or if you are unable to trim your own toenails
- Check with your insurance to see if they will pay to have your foot/nail care done by a Podiatrist
- Some specialty shoes and orthotics may be covered by your insurance
- For area services contact the Aging and Disabilities Resource Center of Winnebago County at (877) 886-2372

**Healthy from Head to Toe**

## Be Safe, Not Sorry

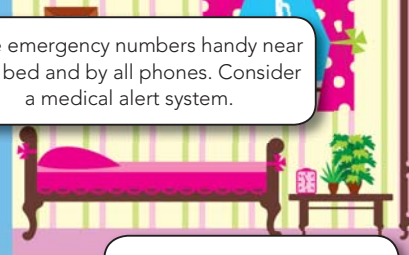
Check Your Home For These  
Easy-To-Fix Safety Hazards



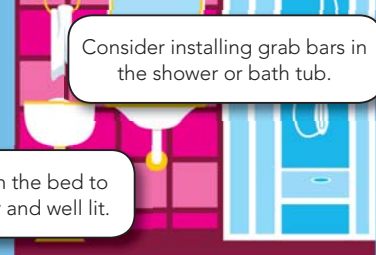
Ensure rooms, halls, and doorways are well lit.

Secure scatter rugs in place or remove them.

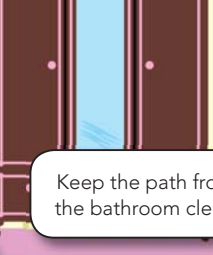
Only use ladders on dry, hard, flat surfaces, and keep your body weight centered.




Have emergency numbers handy near your bed and by all phones. Consider a medical alert system.




Consider installing grab bars in the shower or bath tub.




Keep the path from the bed to the bathroom clear and well lit.



Do not store things on the stairs, even temporarily.



Store heavy items in lower cupboards and lighter ones above.




Wear shoes with good rubber soles. Avoid loose fitting slippers. Avoid rushing.

## To Do

- Prevention will help you maintain your independence. See your Health Care Provider for a fall risk assessment.
- Winnebago County residents are eligible for a FREE home fall assessment by a nurse. Call Winnebago County Health Department to schedule a "Stay Active Be Confident" evaluation (920) 232-3000.
- Free Medical Equipment Loan Locker Larsen-Winchester Lions Club. Call (920) 427-3244



Keep high traffic areas free of clutter.




Ensure decks and stairs are in good repair with railings and good traction. Sidewalks should be level and free of cracks.


**Be Safe, Not Sorry**

## Get Connected


### Fall Prevention is a Team Effort; Who is on Your Team?

 Health  
Care  
Provider


Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

 Church


Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

 Family

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

 Neighbor


Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

 Friends

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

 Counselor


Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

 Pharmacist


Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

 Chiropractor

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

 Nurse

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



**Eye Doctor**

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_




**Public Health**  
Waukeago County Health Department

**Health Dept.**

Phone: 920-232-3000




**ADRC**

Phone: 877-886-2372




**Audiologist**

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_




**Podiatrist**

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_




**Home Care**

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_




**Senior Center**

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



**Fitness Center**

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



**Physical Therapist**

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



**Dentist**

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



**Community Safety**

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Get Connected**

# Strength & Balance

## Recommended Programs

### Strong Bones

A progressive strength-training program designed to improve muscle strength and balance.

Winnebago County Health Department:  
(920) 232-3000

### Stepping On

7-week program that provides specific knowledge and skills to prevent falls.

Winnebago County Health Department:  
(920) 232-3000

### Tai Chi

Low impact exercise consisting of slow movements that is gentle enough for any age or physical ability.

Oshkosh Seniors Center: (920) 232-5310  
Neenah-Menasha YMCA: (920) 729-9622

### Senior Center Fitness Programs

Menasha: (920) 967-3530  
Omro: (920) 685-0380  
Oshkosh: (920) 232-5310

### Local Park and Recreation Departments

Oshkosh: (920) 236-5080  
Neenah: (920) 886-6060  
Menasha: (920) 967-3640

### YMCA Fitness Programs

Neenah-Menasha: (920) 729-9622  
Oshkosh Downtown: (920) 236-3380  
Oshkosh 20th Ave: (920) 230-8439

## To Do

- Be an active ager, know your options  
mobility aids to build confidence and maintain independence
- For local resources and to find a class, visit [www.FindingBalanceTogether.org](http://www.FindingBalanceTogether.org)
- Ask about modification of activities to fit  
personal fitness level

# HEALTHY AGING

## REGULAR EXERCISE

### HELPS IMPROVE YOUR

- mood
- overall energy level
- well-being

### CAN HELP LOWER YOUR RISK OF

- heart disease
- some cancers
- diabetes
- dementia



## WALKING

is probably the easiest exercise.

All you need is 30 MINUTES A DAY 5X A WEEK

YOU CAN  
BREAK  
THAT UP

MORNING



AFTERNOON



EVENING



## Improve Your Balance

### 4 Basic Exercises



#### KNEE BENDS *Hold on to a sturdy chair or countertop*

# 1

- Keep back straight
- Lower body and bend knees
- Raise body back up
- Repeat 10-15 times



#### HEEL RAISES *Hold on to a sturdy chair or countertop*

# 2

- Stand straight
- Raise up on toes slowly
- Lower heels to ground slowly
- Repeat 10-15 times



#### SIDE LEG RAISES *Hold on to a sturdy chair or countertop*

# 3

- Keep back straight
- Raise one leg out to side
- Return leg to standing
- Repeat 10-15 times
- Switch sides



#### SIT TO STAND *Use a sturdy chair*

# 4

- Sit in chair, feet on ground
- Stretch both arms out front
- Rise up to standing position
- Sit back down
- Repeat 10 times



TALK WITH YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER BEFORE STARTING A NEW EXERCISE ROUTINE.

## Winnebago County Fall Prevention Coalition

### Mission Statement:

The mission of the Winnebago County Fall Prevention Coalition is to reduce falls and fall-related complications and deaths among Winnebago County adults through the integration of best practices from community based and medical prevention approaches.

### Who We Are:

The coalition is made up of community members and health professionals that have on-going concern over the high rate of falls in Wisconsin and in our local community. Members are actively engaged in working with older adults to reduce their risk of falling.

## Contact Information

The Winnebago County Fall Prevention Coalition would like to invite anyone interested in local fall prevention activities to contact the Winnebago County Health Department at 920-232-3000.

## Active Coalition Members

Advocap, Inc.  
Affinity Visiting Nurses  
Aging & Disability Resource Center of  
Winnebago County  
Aurora Medical Center  
Hometown Pharmacy  
Lakeland Care  
Menasha Health Department  
Morton LTC Pharmacy  
Oasis Senior Advisors  
Oshkosh/Winnebago County Housing Authority  
Rehab Arisces  
Trauma Center at ThedaCare-Neenah  
Valley VNA Senior Services  
Winnebago County Health Department  
Winnebago County Assisted Living Facilities

The Winnebago County Fall Prevention Coalition meets regularly and membership continues to grow.

*A special Thank You to Fox Valley Regional Trauma Advisory Council and Lakeland Care.*



**ThedaCare**<sup>™</sup>

A proud sponsor and active member of the coalition