

## Falls in the elderly

A “fall” is defined as “falling over contrary to one’s own intentions.” Anyone can fall, after stumbling on a step, for example; however, the risk of this fall rises with age, and the number of people who fall increases with age. As we age, our muscles become weaker, and our bones become more brittle, which means that the smallest fall can result in a serious injury. The proportion of elderly individuals who fracture their legs, arms, and spines through falling is actually increasing, and fractures are a known risk factor for becoming bedridden. Some elderly individuals become bedridden after they stop leaving home due to anxiety over “potentially falling.” They subsequently become secluded in their own homes and eventually become less able to move around.

Falls in the elderly are prone to occur and have serious consequences. Therefore, tackling falls in the elderly and by extension, preventing fractures, is an extremely important issue.



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# SAFETY ON!

Watchwords to prevent falls



- S**: Be mindful of slippers and footwear
- A**: Stay physically active
- F**: Eat a balanced food and diet regularly
- E**: Be safe both inside and outside home environment
- T**: Take your tablets (medicine) properly
- Y**: Try to improve your yesight



# Watchwords to prevent falls

## SAFETY ON!

### S (Slipper)

: Be mindful of slippers and footwear

- Avoid wearing footwear that comes off easily or slippery footwear, such as slippers and sandals.
- Choose footwear in which it is difficult to fall, such as shoes with a good grip and low heels, and those which are a good fit.



### A (Activity)

: Stay physically active

- Reduced motor function, including muscle strength and balance ability, is linked to falls. Try to maintain and improve your motor function by moving your body.
- Lack of exercise is linked to osteoporosis. The less you go out, the less time you spend in the sun. This weakens your bones and increases the risk of fractures. It is important to keep doing exercise and going out.



### F (Food)

: Eat a balanced food and diet regularly

- A well-balanced diet is important for leading an active life and maintaining motor function.
- When you lack calcium and vitamin D, your bones become weaker, which increases the risk of fractures.



### E (Environment)

: Be safe both inside and outside home environment

- Falls can occur from tripping on small obstacles, such as floor cushions, small boxes, books, and small bumps caused by doorsills and carpets. Be careful even within the familiar surroundings of your home.
- Wet floors represent higher risks for slipping.
- Inadequate or improper lighting is linked to falls.
- Add handrails, anti-slip material, and other workarounds to places where falls are likely to occur, such as staircases and the bathroom.
- In addition to sloping streets, falls can occur on flat streets. When going out in general, take sufficient care when encountering bumps, when carrying bags in both hands, and when cars or bicycles approach.



### T (Tablet)

: Take your tablets (medicine) properly

- Taking your medicine incorrectly can result in lightheadedness and other problems, which can greatly increase the risk of falls. Ensure to take your medicine properly in accordance with your doctor's or pharmacist's instructions.



### Y (Eyesight)

: Try to improve your eyesight

- The inability to see your surroundings clearly can increase the risk for falling. Use glasses that are suitable for your eyes. Make sure to get proper treatment for any eye diseases, such as cataracts and glaucoma.

