

# National Falls Prevention Month: Falls In the Community



PRAIRIE MOUNTAIN HEALTH  
SANTÉ PRAIRIE MOUNTAIN

## Costs Associated with Falls

Falls cost the province of Manitoba \$345 million annually (both direct healthcare costs and indirect injury healthcare costs) and are the leading cause of injury-related hospitalizations for older Canadians. The average length of hospitalization stay due to falls-related injuries is 25.4 days. Unfortunately, a serious fall for an older adult can result in a loss of independence and their inability to remain living at home. The incorporation of some simple tips can help to minimize the risk of this happening.

## Minimize These Hazards

- Walking on icy sidewalks or broken pavement,
- Loose throw rugs,
- Flooring either wet or in disrepair,
- Furniture in the middle of the room,
- Poor/ no lighting in bedroom/hallway/washroom,
- Not wearing non-slip footwear,
- Taking sleep aid medication,
- Not eating healthy, regular meals,
- Not remaining hydrated,
- Drinking alcohol,
- Bathing/showering without installed grab bars,
- Getting out of bed too quickly (especially for those with high blood pressure),
- Electrical cords on the floor,
- Wearing clothing that is too long,
- Going up/down stairs without using handrails,
- Not using mobility aids as per provider's instructions.



## Tips to Reduce the Number of falls/ Severity of Injuries

- Take 1000 I.U. Vitamin D per day.
- For those who are at high risk, discuss the wearing of hip protectors with a healthcare provider.
- Wear non-slip indoor shoes instead of slippers or socks.
- Discuss your medications with your doctor, pharmacist or NP.
- Incorporate physical activity into your life (like yoga, walking, Tai Chi).
- Keep a lamp beside your bed so you can turn it on if you get up in the night (or use a nightlight).
- Keep your home tidy so there is nothing on the floor to trip over.
- Have regular eye check-ups.
- Don't rush-take your time.
- Don't climb onto a ladder or step stool-ask someone for help.

*(Information adapted from the WRHA site "Staying on Your Feet -Taking Steps to Prevent Falls")*

**FALLS ARE THE LEADING CAUSE OF PERMANENT, PARTIAL AND TOTAL INJURY-RELATED DISABILITY FOR MANITOBANS OF ANY AGE.**