



ANYONE CAN FALL

Prevent it from happening to you

Checking Your Medications

Taking certain drugs alone or in combination with other ones can increase your risk of falling. This is especially important since the way medications are handled by the body can change as we age.

If you take a medicine that may make you feel confused, drowsy, or dizzy, pay attention to how it affects your balance and how it makes you feel. In addition, it is recommended that all medications including prescriptions, over-the-counter drugs, vitamins, herbs and other natural health products, be reviewed at least once a year by a qualified healthcare professional to help address potential drug side effects.

The good news is that family, friends, primary care providers and pharmacists can all play a role to ensure that you are getting the most benefit from your medication. Keep in mind that by reaching out to others for support, you can better reduce your risk of falling, prevent serious injuries and maintain your independence.



Trauma NB



To learn more about preventing falls, visit www.findingbalancenb.ca

Helpful tips

- Talk to your primary care provider or pharmacist as soon as possible if your medications make you feel drowsy or dizzy. They may need to change the type, dose or time of day you take them.
- Use only one pharmacy to fill your prescriptions and keep a current medication list in your wallet and at home.
- Do not share your prescription medications or take another person's medications.
- Be sure that you safely store your medications, as per the manufacturer's instructions.
- Check your medications' expiry date before using them and return expired or unused medications to your local pharmacy for proper disposal. Talk to your pharmacist if you have any questions about the safe disposal of medications.

Medication review

- It is important to understand your prescribed and over-the-counter medications before you begin take them. This includes knowing why you take them, the dosage, how often, and the possible side effects such as drowsiness, dizziness, vision problems, low blood pressure, or increased bleeding.
- Medications tend to have stronger effects among older adults and therefore the more you take, the higher your risk of experiencing adverse drug reactions. This is why it is recommended that you consult your pharmacist each year for a medication review, especially if you take multiple medications.
- A medication review is a process by which the use of medication is carefully reviewed by a qualified healthcare professional to ensure that each medication taken is used appropriately, optimally, and that its benefits outweigh its harms.
- If you are a New Brunswick Prescription Drug Program beneficiary who is taking at least three different prescription medications for chronic conditions, you may be eligible for a publicly-funded, annual medication review by a local pharmacist as part of the NB PharmaCheck Program. For more information, please call the Toll-free Seniors Information Line at 1-855-550-0552.



Preparing for your appointment

- Once a year, put all your medications in a bag and take them to your primary care provider (family physician or nurse practitioner) or pharmacist for them to review.
- The bag should include any over-the-counter or prescription drugs, herbs, vitamins, dietary supplements, and topical treatments such as ointments and creams.
- Keep track of side effects or possible drug interactions and let your primary care provider or pharmacist know right away about any unexpected symptoms or changes in the way you feel.
- Take along a friend or relative to your appointments if you think you might need help to understand what your primary care provider tells you. Write down the information your provider gives you about your medicines or your health condition.
- Alcohol can affect your medications. Talk to your primary care provider or pharmacist about your alcohol intake.
- Ask your primary care provider about how to deal with sleep problems without using sleeping pills.

Remember to ask your pharmacist or primary care provider if you are:

- Having trouble swallowing your medications.
- Having trouble opening your medications or handling your pills.
- Having difficulty reading the medication labels.
- Finding it hard to remember to take your medication.

Falls are not a normal part of aging.
Talk to your primary care provider if you have had a fall.

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