

Your Care Instructions

Worries about falls don't need to keep you indoors. Outdoor activities, like walking, have many benefits for your health. You will need to watch your step and learn a few safety measures.

If you are worried about having a fall outdoors, ask your doctor about exercises, classes or physiotherapy that may help. You can learn ways to gain strength, flexibility and balance. Ask if it might help to use a cane or walker.

You can make your time outdoors safer with a few simple measures.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor or nurse call line if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

How can you prevent falls outdoors?

- Wear shoes with firm soles and low heels. If you have to walk on an icy surface, use grippers that can be worn over your shoes in bad weather.
- Be extra careful if weather is bad. Walk on the grass when the sidewalks are slick. If you live in a place that gets snow and ice in the winter, sprinkle salt on slippery stairs and sidewalks.
- Be careful getting on or off buses and trains or getting in and out of cars. If handrails are available, use them.
- Be careful when you cross the street. Look for crosswalks or places where curb cuts or ramps are present.
- Try not to hurry, especially if you are carrying something.
- Be cautious in parking lots or garages — there may be curbs or changes in pavement, or the height of the pavement may vary.
- Make sure to wear the correct eyeglasses if you need them. Reading glasses or bifocals can make it harder to see hazards that might be in your way.
- If you are walking outdoors for exercise, try to:
 - Walk in well-lighted, well-maintained areas. These include high school or college tracks, shopping malls and public spaces.
 - Walk with a partner.
 - Watch out for cracked sidewalks, curbs or changes in the height of the pavement, exposed tree roots and debris, such as fallen leaves or branches.

For 24/7 nurse advice and general health information, call Health Link at 811.

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