FALL PREVENTION

- 9 out of 10 hip fractures are caused by falls
- A person with a hip fracture is 5-20% more likely to die in the first year after their fall
- Most falls happen to women in their own homes in the afternoon
- Following a fall, 15-25% of people who were living at home, will change to long-term care facilities
- Fractures are the 5th highest cause of hospitalizations among women age 65 and over

FALL PREVENTION ACTIVITIES

Promote Strong Bones

- Get adequate amounts of Calcium
- (1200mg/day from food and supplements and Vitamin D)

- Exercise several times a week (both weight bearing and resistance training)
- Ask your health care provider about a Bone Density Test

- Ask your health care provider about medications to reduce bone loss to prevent fractures

Improve Strength and Balance

- Do muscle strengthening exercises
- Get good vision correction
- Practice wearing bi- and tri-focals
- Do daily balance exercises

Check your medications

(some may increase risk of falling)

- Blood pressure meds
- Heart meds
- Diuretics/water pills
- Muscle relaxants and tranquilizers

DAILY BALANCE EXERCISES

- While holding back of chair, sink or counter top, practice standing on one leg. Gradually increase the time to reach one minute, and try without holding on as your balance improves.
- While holding back of chair, counter or sink top, practice standing on your toes then rock back to balance on your heels. Hold each position for 6 seconds.
- While holding back of chair, counter or sink top, with both hands, make a big circle to the left with hips, repeat to right. Do not move shoulders or feet. Repeat 5 times.

At any age, people can improve their environments in ways that reduce their risk of falling and breaking a bone.

OUTDOOR SAFETY TIPS

- Use a walker or cane in bad weather and wear warm, rubber-soled boots for traction.
- Allow time for your eyes to adjust when moving between indoor and outdoor lighting.
- Be cautious of slippery floors in public buildings; use carpet runners when available.
- Identify community services for assistance, like 24-hour pharmacies and grocery stores that offer delivery, especially during bad weather.
- Use a shoulder bag or backpack to keep hands free.
- Be cautious at curbs; check height before stepping and watch for cut-away curbs that may pose a fall risk.

INDOOR SAFETY TIPS

- Keep rooms clutter-free.
- Maintain smooth, non-slippery floors and be mindful of level changes.
- Wear supportive, low-heeled shoes; avoid socks or backless slippers.
- Keep electrical cords out of walkways.
- Ensure well-lit stairwells with handrails; add fluorescent tape on step edges.
- Install grab bars in bathrooms; use a shower chair if needed.
- Use a rubber bath mat in the shower or tub.
- Install night lights or have them plugged in to your bedroom, bathrooms and passageways.
- Improve lighting with ceiling fixtures or lamps that are easily accessible.
- Use a sturdy step or stool with handrails for hard-to-reach areas; reorganize spaces to reduce the need for excessive reaching.
- Consider keeping a mobile phone on you at all times to allow you to answer calls easily and request help if needed.
- Maintain at least a week's supply of medications and consult with your pharmacist or GP to avoid risks of falling and check for interactions.
- Arrange daily contact with a family member or friend to ensure someone knows your whereabouts.
- If living alone, consider having security cameras so that your close family can check on you.

STRENGTH AND BALANCE CLASSES

It is never too late to improve your strength and balance. At Physio-Wise, we run weekly strength and balance classes which are designed to help reduce the risk of falls by addressing lower limb weakness and balance difficulties.

Prior to taking part in your first class, you will need to have an individual comprehensive balance assessment. This will enable your Strength and Balance Class physiotherapist to individually tailor your class exercises to safely improve your strength and balance. Our classes are small so that we can give full attention to each person in the class to optimise their outcomes. Private Health Insurance rebates are available for our classes.

Please ask our reception staff or your physiotherapist for more information.