



# orthopedic ONE

## PREVENTING FALLS: KNOW YOUR RISK



- Falls are NOT a normal part of aging.
- Most falls can be prevented and you have the power to reduce your risk.

### RISK FACTORS FOR FALLS IN OLDER ADULTS

- Weakness/loss of strength
- Difficulty with walking and balance OR improper use of an assistive device (walker or cane)
- Certain medicines can affect how steady you are on your feet.
- Vision problems
- Home hazards or dangers
- Poor posture can cause you to be off balance.
- Loss of/altered sensation
- History of a fall
- Nutritional deficiency – an imbalance of nutrients can affect muscle function/strength).



### HOW TO REDUCE YOUR FALL RISK

- **Exercise regularly:** gentle exercise can help build or maintain strength in your legs.
- **Work with a physical therapist** to improve your strength, walking and/or balance. Physical therapists can also teach you to properly use a cane or walker.
- **Ask your doctor** about your medications and how they might affect your balance or stability.
- **Get regular vision exams** to check for vision loss that could affect your balance or safety moving around your home/community.
- **Tell your doctor if you have suffered a fall** so you can figure out a plan to reduce your risk of additional falls.
- **Address home hazards/dangers:**
  - Repair broken or uneven steps.
  - Remove throw rugs or clutter that can be tripped over.
  - Add grab bars or rails where you need them.
  - Use non slip mats or adhesive tread strips on bath/shower floor.

