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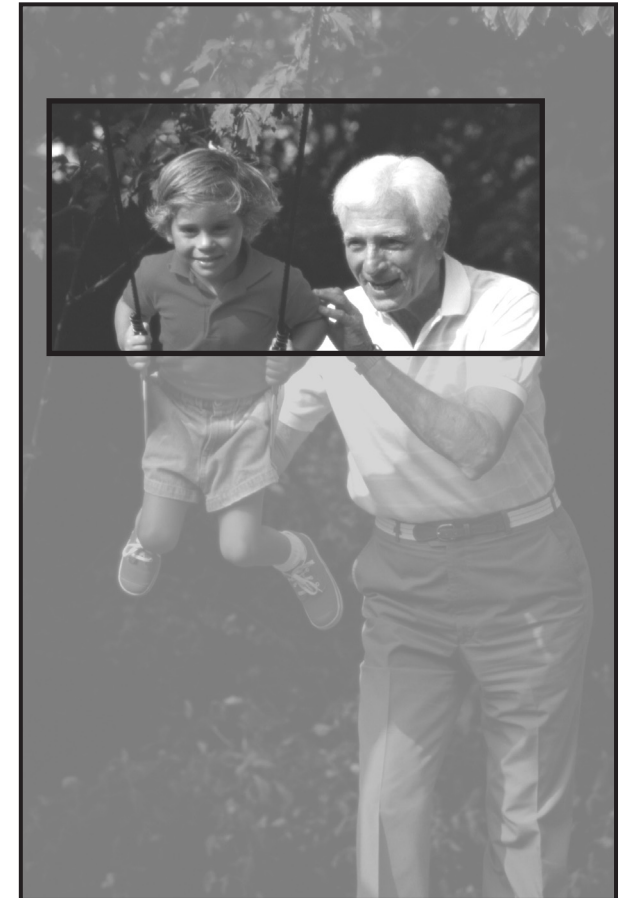
- Inform all of your health care providers of all the medications you take, both prescription and over the counter. It's helpful if you keep a log of your medicines to take to each appointment.
- Get regular checkups that include vision and hearing exams. Alert your doctors of any problems you might be having.
- Wear eyeglasses and hearing aids as directed. Make your health care providers aware if these aids are not adequately helping or not fitting properly.
- Your doctor may suggest the use of  or walker to help. They should explain how to use it.
- There are emergency response devices available that can signal that you are in need of help. Lifeline service is available through Beaufort County Hospital Lifeline. Sheryl B. Cox, Coordinator can be reached at (252) 975-4176.
- Wear sturdy shoes, with nonskid soles, flat bottoms, and good support.

Most importantly, if you have weak muscles, gait or balance problems, dizziness or confusion due to medications, discuss this with your health care provider. They may suggest special exercises, assistive devices such as a cane or walker, or changes in your medication regimen.

What should you do in case you fall?

- Fall the "right way". Put your arms around your head and try to "roll forward"
- Relax your body as much as possible to help absorb the shock of the fall.
- Turn so you land on the "side of your buttocks, thigh or shoulder."
- If you land "feet first", bend your knees and curl your body as you touch the ground.
- Keep local emergency numbers by the phone or dial "911." If your phone has speed dial, set it up to include your emergency contacts.
- Wear your medical alert bracelet at all times, if you have one.
- Make sure you discuss with family or friends who to contact in case of an emergency. Provide the numbers for your health care provider. Make them a list of your medications and allergies.
- If you fall and are able to move and do it safely by rolling over onto your stomach. Get onto your knees, and if needed, crawl to a piece of low, sturdy furniture to use as leverage. Place one foot flat on the ground and stand up slowly. Stop and wait until help arrives if you feel any sharp pain or dizziness. 

A Look Inside: Fall Prevention



Beaufort County Hospital
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a division of:



Slips & falls in the home are a serious matter!

They can result in:

- Major injuries such as fractures
- Medical complications
- Loss of independence



Are you at risk of falling?

If you or your loved ones can answer yes to any of the following questions, you might be at higher risk for falls:

- Do you have poor eyesight or hearing?
- Do you experience trouble with balance?
- Do you experience dizziness?
- Do you have movement difficulties or numbness in the limbs?
- Are you taking certain medications that affect judgment, coordination, balance, or reaction time?
- Do you drink alcohol?
- Do you ever feel that depression or stress, makes you preoccupied and less alert to hazards?

Preventing falls by safeguarding your home!

- Always have ample lighting throughout the house, especially in stairways and halls
- Install night lights throughout house
- Install a light switch at the top & bottom of each stairway
- Keep a flashlight at the bedside & make sure the light switch can be reached from your bed
- Secure rugs and use nonskid pads for backing
- Remove rugs or runners that slip
- Choose low pile carpeting
- Use no-wax cleaners on floors
- Make sure there are handrails on both sides of stairways and steps
- Install nonskid treads on the stairs
- Mark the first and last steps with a bright color strip for identification
- Keep phone and electrical cords out of pathways
- Move items to lower shelves to avoid the use of step stools and ladders
- Install grab bars in the tub/shower and by the toilet
- Make sure there are nonskid bath strips or mats in the tub or shower
- If needed, use a bath bench
- Purchase raised toilet seats if needed
- Arrange furniture so that it doesn't block traffic areas.

Promote an active & healthy lifestyle!

By doing so, you will help keep your body strong and your mind clear, thereby putting you less at risk for falls.

- Stay active, participate in regular physical activity such as stretching, weight-bearing activities, and aerobic activities, such as walking.
- Before starting any exercise program, consult with your doctor.
- Maintain a healthy diet, and be sure not to skip meals.
- Limit alcohol. It can make you less alert and may be dangerous if taken with certain medications.
- Use medications wisely by taking them as directed and reporting any side effects to your doctor.

Before starting any exercise program, consult your doctor.



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