



# ANYONE CAN FALL

*Prevent it from happening to you*

## Avoiding Risky Behaviours

For older adults, risky behaviours can lead to an increase in falls and related injuries. So, as we age, it can become risky to continue doing some of the things we used to do when we were younger. Some examples of risky behaviour may include:

- Climbing a ladder alone.
- Carrying bulky objects that block your view.
- Allowing clutter to accumulate in and around your home.
- Being in a hurry and rushing around without paying attention to where you are stepping.

### **Why Avoid Risk?**

As we age, we each need to be aware of our physical strengths and weaknesses. This awareness can help you assess your risk of falling and avoid risks. Falls can lead to serious injuries for older adults. In some cases, those injuries have long-lasting effects on health and the ability to live independently. Being overly confident can be dangerous.

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**FALLS ARE NOT A NORMAL PART OF AGING.**  
*Talk to your health care provider if you have had a fall.*



## Alcohol and Other Substance Use

Be mindful of what you consume, as alcohol and other substances can increase your risk of a fall. Watch for changes to your balance or anything else that could affect your safety. Older adults should be especially careful when using:

- Either prescribed or over-the-counter medications. Pay special attention to anything that relaxes you, helps you sleep, or improves your mood. Keep track of all your medicines and understand what they do to your body. Don't take at the time or the wrong way. Mixing certain medications can lead to serious harm.
- Cannabis products in any form. Keep in mind that it can be hard to manage your level of consumption when eating cannabis-infused edibles such as gummies, chocolate, or other confections.
- Alcoholic drinks such as beers, wines, and distilled beverages. As we age, our bodies may become more sensitive to the effects of alcohol. As well, alcohol should not be used with many medications. This is why we recommend older adults be extra careful when drinking alcohol. Read the labels of all new medications. Watch for new side effects from drinking.

## Assistive Devices

Assistive devices provide support to help people continue their daily activities in a safe manner. For older adults, proper use of assistive devices can help decrease the risk of falling. If you need an assistive device but choose not to use it, you may be increasing your risk of falling and having related injuries. For example:

- Having a cane or a wheeled walker but walking without it.
- Having eyeglasses and not wearing them.
- Needing a hearing aid but not using it.
- Having a bath seat or grab bars and not using them.

If you have an assistive device, use it. If it isn't right for you, talk with an occupational therapist, physiotherapist, or your primary health care provider.

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For more information, look for the **Additional Resources for Older Adults** on the Finding Balance NB website at [www.FindingBalanceNB.ca](http://www.FindingBalanceNB.ca)