



# My Doctor's Visit

## TIPS ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, PREVENTING FALLS, AND URINARY INCONTINENCE

During your visit, you and your doctor discussed a variety of health topics and focused on your personal plan. Here are a few resources to help you think about your physical activity level, prevent falls, and consider your bladder control.





# Fall Prevention

## HERE ARE A FEW TIPS TO KEEP YOU ON YOUR FEET AND MOVING FORWARD.

**EXERCISE REGULARLY.** Get up and move! Building muscles and keeping ligaments lean and mean helps you put your best foot forward.

**REGULARLY REVIEW YOUR MEDICATIONS WITH YOUR DOCTOR AND/OR PHARMACIST.** This includes physician prescribed medications and any over-the-counter supplements or vitamins you take. Some combinations may interact and cause side effects that increase your risk of falling. Take your medications only as prescribed.

**TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR.** Ask for an assessment of your risk for falling. And make sure to share your history of recent falls.

**GET YOUR VISION AND HEARING CHECKED ANNUALLY AND UPDATE YOUR EYEGLASSES.** Your eyes and ears are key to keeping you on your feet.

**TALK TO YOUR FAMILY MEMBERS.** Enlist the support of family members in taking simple steps to stay safe. An unsafe home makes a hazard for falling for the very young to the very old.

**KEEP YOUR HOME SAFE.** Remove tripping hazards, increase lighting in low light areas, make stairs safe, and install grab bars in areas of uneven flooring.

**TAKE A FALLS PREVENTION CLASS.** Visit [utahfallprevention.org](http://utahfallprevention.org) to sign up.

## CHECK YOUR RISK FOR FALLING. Please circle "Yes" or "No" for each statement below.

YES	2	NO	0	I have fallen in the past year.
YES	2	NO	0	I use or have been advised to use a cane or walker to get around safely.
YES	1	NO	0	Sometimes I feel unsteady when I am walking.
YES	1	NO	0	I steady myself by holding onto furniture when walking at home.
YES	1	NO	0	I am worried about falling.
YES	1	NO	0	I need to push with my hands to stand up from a chair.
YES	1	NO	0	I have some trouble stepping up onto a curb.
YES	1	NO	0	I often have to rush to the toilet.
YES	1	NO	0	I have lost some feeling in my feet.
YES	1	NO	0	I take medicine that sometimes makes me feel light-headed.
YES	1	NO	0	I take medicine to help me sleep or improve my mood.
YES	1	NO	0	I often feel sad or depressed.

### TOTAL

**Add up the number of points for each "yes" answer. If you scored 4 points or more, you may be at increased risk for falling. Discuss your falls prevention plan with your doctor.**

Resource: Fall Risk Assessment Tool developed by the Greater Los Angeles VA Geriatric Research Education Clinical Center and it's affiliates (Rubenstein et al. J Safety Re; 2011:42(6)493-499). Adapted with permission of the authors." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for Injury Prevention and Control.

# Improving and Maintaining Physical Activity



**Our risk of developing conditions that affect our lifestyle and independence increases as we age. By eating right and exercising regularly, we can continue to participate in enjoyable activities. Exercise benefits include:**

- > Maintain independence at home
- > Increased immune resistance
- > Increased flexibility, balance, and muscle strength to help prevent falls
- > Improved brainpower/alertness
- > Increased energy and endurance
- > Improved stress management and improved mood and outlook on life
- > Weight loss and reduced blood pressure

**If you're 65 or older and generally fit with no health conditions that limit your mobility, you should try to exercise daily. The right mix of different types of exercise can help you stay fit and reduce your overall health risks, including your risk for falling.**

A good weekly exercise program should consist of 150 minutes of endurance or aerobic exercise that increases your breathing and heart rate combined with strength training, flexibility, and balance exercises.

What did your doctor recommend to improve your physical activity?

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**Be sure to talk to your doctor before you begin any type of new fitness program.**





## Improving and Maintaining Physical Activity

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### SOME OF THE BEST EXERCISES FOR OLDER ADULTS INCLUDE:



**WALKING.** Even if you don't have time for a workout, you still need to put one foot in front of the other to get where you need to go. It's recommended that most people take 10,000 steps per day, whether they work out or not. Walking is free and it can have a huge impact on your health.



**SWIMMING.** There is a reason swimming is called the perfect exercise. Whether you're doing the breaststroke or taking a water aerobics class, swimming increases your cardiovascular fitness, strengthening your muscles while putting minimal stress on your bones and joints.



**CYCLING OR STATIONARY BIKE.** This is another low-impact cardiovascular exercise that is ideal for those who want to increase their leg strength, but suffer from joint issues or osteoporosis.



**AEROBIC AND STRENGTH CLASSES.** There is no end to the list of group exercises available, from Zumba and other types of dance classes to body-pump, boot camp, and chair aerobics. Not only will you have fun and make new friends, but your chances of making exercise a habit are greatly increased.



**YOGA AND PILATES.** Yoga and Pilates are low-impact joint-friendly activities that focus on increasing strength, balance, and stability. This makes them especially good for improving balance in older adults.



**BODYWEIGHT TRAINING.** These exercises make your muscles stronger and help build endurance. You don't have to bench press to keep your muscles healthy. Simple bodyweight exercises like chair squats, single-leg stands, wall pushups, and stair climbing will help keep your body strong.



**RESISTANCE-BAND TRAINING.** These inexpensive and beginner-friendly tools are perfect for home workouts. They can help you challenge your muscles in ways you can't without equipment. For example, when it comes to strengthening your back (important for balance and good posture), rows and other pulling motions are vital—but they can be tough to do without exercise equipment. A resistance band allows you to use your body's resistance to simulate these types of exercises.



**PICKLEBALL.** This new aerobic workout is perfect for older adults because it is easy to play, very social, and less stressful on muscles, tendons, and joints.

#### Resources:

SilverSneakers.com. "6 Best Exercises for Seniors for Balance and Stability." Web. Aug. 2018. <[silversneakers.com/blog/balance-stability-exercises-seniors/](https://silversneakers.com/blog/balance-stability-exercises-seniors/)>. SilverSneakers.com. "9 Best Types of Exercise for Older Adults." Web. Aug. 2018. <[silversneakers.com/blog/best-exercise-older-adults/](https://silversneakers.com/blog/best-exercise-older-adults/)>. HealthLine.com. "Exercise Plan for Seniors." Web. Aug. 2018. <[healthline.com/health/everyday-fitness/senior-workouts](https://healthline.com/health/everyday-fitness/senior-workouts/)>.

[utahfallsprevention.org](https://utahfallsprevention.org)

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**WHAT IS URINARY INCONTINENCE?** Urinary incontinence isn't a disease. It's a leaking, frequency, or urgency to urinate that you can't control. Though your risk increases with age, it isn't a normal part of aging. For most people, simple lifestyle changes or medical treatment can ease discomfort or stop urinary incontinence.

Though treatable, most people go untreated because they may be too embarrassed or think that nothing can be done. However, it's important to get medical advice as soon as possible because urinary incontinence may:

- > Indicate a more serious underlying condition
- > Cause you to restrict your daily activities and limit social interactions
- > Increase your risk for falls if you need to rush to the bathroom

## TYPES OF URINARY INCONTINENCE:

- > **Stress incontinence.** Urine leaks when you cough, sneeze, laugh, exercise, or lift heavy objects.
- > **Urge incontinence.** You have a sudden, strong urge to urinate with an involuntary loss of urine. You may need to urinate often, including throughout the night.
- > **Overflow incontinence.** Frequent or constant dribbling due to a bladder that doesn't empty completely.
- > **Functional incontinence.** A physical or mental problem keeps you from making it to the toilet in time.
- > **Mixed incontinence.** You experience more than one type of urinary incontinence.

Certain foods, drinks, and medications may act as diuretics—stimulating your bladder and increasing your volume of urine.



## THINGS TO AVOID:

- > Alcohol, caffeine, and carbonated drinks
- > Chocolate and sugar
- > Foods high in spice, chili peppers, or acid, especially citrus fruits and fruit juices
- > Talk to your doctor about medications to avoid
- > Large doses of vitamin C

## UNDERLYING CONDITIONS AND RISK FACTORS:

- > **Menopause and hysterectomy.** After menopause or a hysterectomy, your body produces less estrogen. In women, estrogen helps keep the bladder lining and urethra healthy and strong.
- > **Age.** Aging of the bladder muscles can decrease its ability to store urine.
- > **Enlarged prostate and prostate cancer.** In older men, incontinence is often caused by prostate enlargement. More often, it's a side effect of prostate cancer.
- > **Urinary tract infections and constipation.** These can irritate your bladder, causing strong urges to urinate.



# Urinary Incontinence Management

- > **Obstruction.** A urinary tract tumor or urinary stones can block urine, leading to overflow incontinence.
- > **Disease.** Diabetes and high blood pressure may put you at increased risk for incontinence.
- > **Neurological disorders.** Parkinson's disease, a stroke, etc. can interfere with bladder control nerve signals.
- > **Obesity.** Increases your risk for incontinence, while weight loss improves bladder function and symptoms.
- > **Smoking.** Tobacco use may increase your risk of urinary incontinence.
- > **Family history.** If a family member has incontinence, your risk of developing the condition is higher.

## PREVENTION:



- > Maintain a healthy weight
- > Practice pelvic floor or Kegel exercises
- > Avoid bladder irritants, like caffeine, alcohol, and acidic food
- > Eat more fiber, which can prevent constipation, a cause of urinary incontinence
- > Don't smoke, or get help to quit smoking

Treatment for incontinence depends on type, severity, and the underlying cause. If symptoms are caused by an underlying condition, your doctor will treat that condition first, starting with the least invasive therapy.

## TREATMENT:

- > **Behavioral techniques.** These include bladder training and liquid and diet management.
- > **Pelvic floor or Kegel exercises.** This exercise helps strengthen the muscles that help control urination.
- > **Medications.** Your doctor may prescribe a medication as a part of your treatment.

## DON'T FORGET YOUR FLU SHOT



People ages 65 and older are at greater risk for serious complications from the flu.

Flu season runs from October through March, so the sooner in the Fall you get your shot, the better.

You can get your flu shot at any pharmacy participating on your plan or call your doctor.

Also talk with your doctor about the shots for pneumonia, shingles, and whooping cough.

## MEDICAL DEVICES:

- > **Urethral insert.** A small, tampon-like disposable device inserted into the urethra to prevent leaks.
- > **Pessary.** A stiff ring is inserted into the vagina to hold up a prolapsed bladder.
- > **Absorbent pads and catheters.** Products that ease the discomfort and inconvenience of leaking urine.



## INTERVENTIONAL THERAPIES:

- > **Bulking material injections.** A synthetic material is injected into the tissue around the urethra to help keep it closed and reduce urine leakage.
- > **Botulinum toxin type A.** Botox is injected into overactive bladder muscles to paralyze movement.

## SURGERY:

- > **Sling procedures.** Strips of your body's tissue, synthetic material, or mesh are used to create a pelvic sling around your urethra and the bladder neck to keep it closed and prevent leakage.
- > **Bladder neck suspension.** This procedure is designed to support your urethra and bladder neck.
- > **Prolapse surgery.** In women with incontinence and pelvic prolapse, treatment may include a sling procedure combined with prolapse surgery.
- > **Artificial urinary sphincter.** In men, a small fluid-filled ring is implanted around the bladder neck to keep the urinary sphincter shut until you are ready to urinate.

What did your doctor recommend to improve your urinary incontinence?

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Resources: Mayo Clinic website. "Urinary Incontinence Symptoms and Causes." Web. Aug. 2018. <[mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/urinary-incontinence/symptoms-causes/syc-20352808](http://mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/urinary-incontinence/symptoms-causes/syc-20352808)>. Mayo Clinic website. "Urinary Incontinence Diagnosis & Treatment." Web. Aug. 2018. <[mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/urinary-incontinence/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20352814](http://mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/urinary-incontinence/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20352814)>.





# Preventive Care Word Search

## FIND THESE WORDS IN THE WORD SEARCH BELOW:

ANNUAL WELLNESS VISIT

FALL PREVENTION

IMMUNIZATIONS

CANCER SCREENING

FLU SHOT

MAMMOGRAM

COLONOSCOPY

RX AS DIRECTED

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

DIABETES SCREENING

URINARY INCONTINENCE

PREVENTIVE CARE

T	D	E	D	J	W	X	O	O	K	K	Y	W	P	E	H	I	F	G	N
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