

STAYING INDEPENDENT SURVEY

Circle "Yes" or "No" for each statement below			What YOU can do to TAKE ACTION
Yes (2)	No	I have fallen in the last 6 months.	Review the list of contributors to falls and talk to your health care provider or doctor about any recent falls.
Yes (2)	No	I have been advised to use a cane or walker to get around safely.	Talk with a physiotherapist or occupational therapist about the most appropriate walking aid for your needs.
Yes (1)	No	Sometimes, I feel unsteady when I am walking.	Sign up for an easy movement exercise program to strengthen mobility. See the backside of this pamphlet for more information.
Yes (1)	No	I steady myself by holding onto furniture when walking at home.	Remove obstacles, clear pathways, and use a walker or cane to help.
Yes (1)	No	I am worried about falling.	Knowing how to prevent falls can reduce fear and promote active living.
Yes (1)	No	I need to push with my hands to stand up from a chair.	Strengthen your leg muscles by doing light exercise, such as Tai Chi, walking classes, or balance programs.
Yes (1)	No	I have some trouble stepping up onto a curb.	Exercise to improve balance and improve your strength. Look into community exercise programs to get you started at the back of this pamphlet.
Yes (1)	No	I often have to rush to the toilet.	Get a nightlight and bedside commode/urinal to limit your need to rush. Keep a phone or emergency call button with you at all times in case you do fall.
Yes (1)	No	I have lost some feeling in my feet.	Talk with your health care provider or podiatrist, as numbness in the feet can cause falls.
Yes (1)	No	I take medicine that sometime makes me feel light-headed or tired than usual.	Talk with your health care provider or pharmacist about medication side effects that may increase your risk of falls.
Yes (1)	No	I take medicine to help me sleep or improve my mood.	Talk with your health care provider or pharmacist about medication side effects that may increase your risk of falls.
Yes (1)	No	I often feel sad or depressed.	Talk with your health care provider about ways you can manage your mood. Look into community programs that can help with feeling isolated and alone.

TOTAL

Total the number of points for each "Yes". If you scored 4 or more points, you may be at increased risk for falling. Discuss your responses with your health care provider or doctor to find ways to reduce your risk, even if you score less than 4 points.

This checklist was developed by the Greater Los Angeles VA Geriatric Research Education Clinical Center and affiliates and is a validated fall risk self-assessment tool (Rubenstein et al. J Safety Res; 2011: 42(6)493-499). Adapted with permission of the authors.

Your guide to staying independent and preventing falls:

Talk to your health care provider or doctor about:

- Any previous falls or near-misses
- If you feel unbalanced or unsteady on your feet
- If you are concerned about falling
- If you experience changes in light-headedness or dizziness symptoms

Your health care provider may ask about your:

- Medications and supplements
- Blood pressure
- Vitamin D intake
- Incontinence
- Vision changes
- Hearing difficulties
- Mobility and balance



Facts on how falls can decrease your independence¹:

- 1 in 3 adults over the age of 65 fall each year
- If you fall once, you are **twice** as likely to fall again
- Unintentional falls are the **leading cause of injury** for Ontarians aged 65 and over
- Even without an injury, a fall can cause loss of confidence and decreased activity
- The more risk factors a person has, the greater their chances of falling.
- Most falls are preventable and predictable!
- Ways to prevent falls include improving mobility, correcting vision problems, and reducing trip and slip hazards in your home and outdoors.
- **Falls are NOT a normal part of aging**

To find out more about local community exercise programs, contact the West Lambton Community Health Centre at 519-344-3017 extension 237.

These materials were produced as part of the Lambton Seniors' Association Falls Prevention Awareness Initiative.

¹Public Health Agency of Canada. Seniors' Falls in Canada: Second Report. (2014).