

1 in 3 seniors fall each year.
It could happen to you or
someone you love.



Assistive Devices to Help Prevent Falls.

A joint venture between the University of
Ottawa and the Canadian Association of
Occupational Therapists (CAOT).

For more information about this project please
contact the CAOT at **613-523-2268**

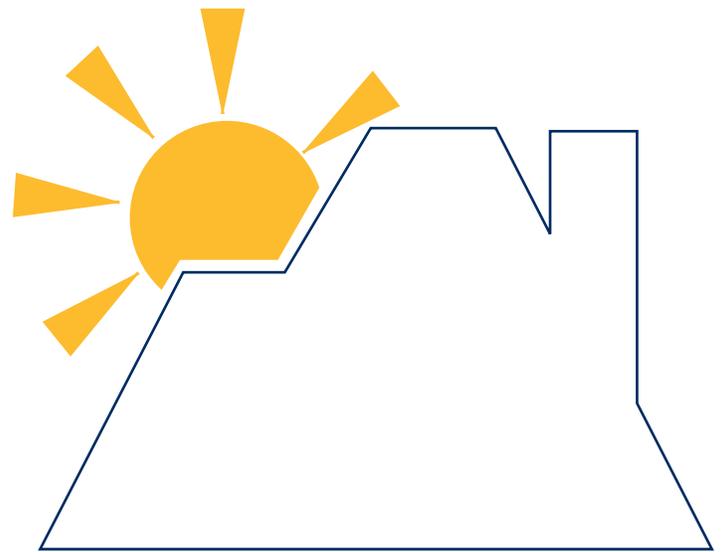
or www.caot.ca

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Prevent Falls!* a Health Canada/Veterans
Affairs Canada Falls Prevention Initiative.

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The views expressed herein do not necessarily
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Not medical advice: The information in this pamphlet is
intended for educational purposes only. It is not and
should not be taken as advice or treatment from a doctor
or health care professional. Never disregard professional
medical or health care advice or delay in seeking it
because of something you have read in this pamphlet.



Prevent falls and
maintain your independence:

Reduce the risks!

As we get older, our bodies change
and we can become more susceptible
to falls. Certain risks can be eliminated
and others considerably reduced by
simple prevention measures.



GENERAL PHYSICAL FITNESS

Given that our daily routines become less physically demanding as we age, we can experience reduced physical fitness, increasing the risk of falls. Maintaining or regaining physical fitness is the most effective falls prevention measure of all. All forms of physical activity including walking, gardening, and dancing, can help maintain the strength and vitality that will protect us from injury. Consult Canada's Physical Activity Guide to Healthy Active Living for Older Adults*.

ABILITY TO MAINTAIN BALANCE

Balance is an important element of fitness. Tai Chi, yoga and dancing are all exercises that increase balance and steadiness - proof that keeping fit can be fun. Other factors can affect balance, including improper use of eyeglasses, misuse or disuse of assistive devices, and certain medications. Make sure you're aware of these dangers. Exercise for balance and use devices and medications appropriately.

DIET AND EATING HABITS

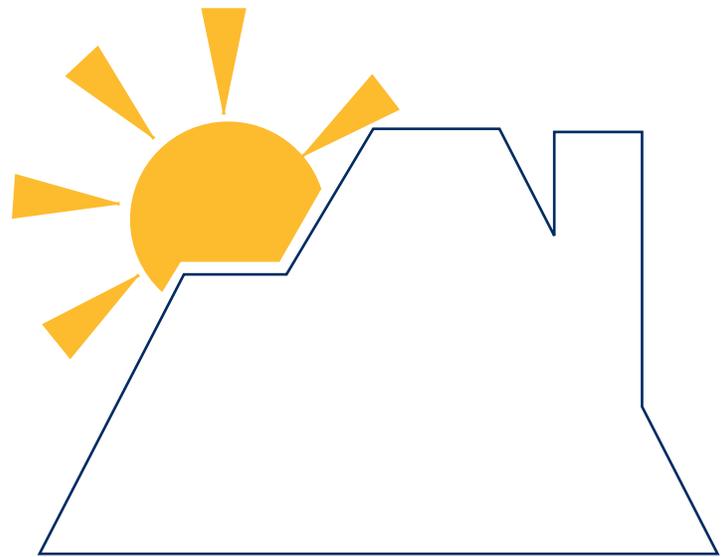
Regular healthy meals help keep up strength and vitality. Consult Canada's Food Guide* to ensure optimum nutrition. If you don't enjoy preparing meals by yourself, occasionally invite friends, eat out, or develop a routine that makes you look forward to your meals (candlelit table, special treat, etc.). If you are unable to prepare meals for yourself, consider home support or meal services provided in your community.

PRECAUTIONS IN AND AROUND THE HOUSE

Reduce the risks of falls and injuries around the house by removing obstacles, improving access and installing aids (grab bars, night lights, etc.) around the house and garden. Consult The Safe Living Guide* to improve safety in your home.

WALKING CONDITIONS

Poorly maintained sidewalks, unlit streets and icy conditions can be dangerous. Before going outside, consider whether it's completely safe. Make sure you report any unsafe conditions in the neighbourhood.



VISION

Make sure that you can see well and that the prescription for your glasses is current; have your eye sight checked regularly. Avoid hats or hoods that obstruct your vision. If you have cataracts or wear bifocal glasses extra caution should be taken.

USE OF MEDICATIONS

Be aware that medications can sometimes cause dizziness or other side effects. Read instructions and warnings carefully. Consult your doctor, pharmacist or health care worker about the possible side effects of the prescription or off-the counter medications you take. And remember that medication and alcohol can be a dangerous combination!

NOTE:

*With a restricted budget, it can be hard to find the money for exercise classes or home improvements such as grab bars or assistive devices. **Veterans** should contact their nearest Veterans Affairs Canada District Office to find out about programs and services they may be eligible to receive that can improve their well-being and help them to stay in their home and community. **Seniors** can contact the municipality, the local health centre or their local Seniors' organization to obtain information on services available at reduced cost or free of charge.*

*You can obtain these publications free of charge by calling 1-800-O-Canada (1-800-622-6232)