



MASSACHUSETTS

Falls Prevention

Take Control of Your Health

Learn How to Prevent Falling

Stay Independent

A simple fall can change your life. Many falls result in minor bumps and bruises, but others can cause more serious injuries, which could lead to a stay in a nursing home, disability, and depression. The good news is that you can take steps to prevent falls, and maintain your independence.

33% of Americans

65 years or older

have had a fall

according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



The risk of falling increases with age, so follow these steps.

Step 1

Find Your Balance

If you have fallen in the past, you're at a higher risk for falling again. This guide will show you how to stay firmly on your feet, and avoid unnecessary falls.

Step 2

Consult Your Doctor

Your doctor, who can assess your overall risk of falling, is your best resource. He or she will recommend the best ways for you to prevent falls, including which exercise program is right for you.

Remember to talk with your doctor before you start any exercise routine.

Step 3

Check Your Eyes and Ears Regularly

Good vision and hearing will help keep you on your feet. Be sure to get examined regularly to make sure everything is working properly.

Wear your shades!

Sunglasses are more than a fashion statement. They also protect your eyes from UV damage.



Get involved, join a walking club!

Go to www.mcoonline.com/keepmoving and click the Keep Moving Fitness Program on the left.

Step 4

Stay Active

Exercising for 30 minutes a day can help you maintain good balance, build leg strength, and increase your overall flexibility. You'll feel better physically, and gain more confidence.

Join a walking club. Walking will boost your energy, lower your blood pressure, and reduce stress.

Did You Know? Our fitness reimbursement can save you up to \$150 annually in qualified health club membership fees and exercise classes. In addition, fitness classes available at Massachusetts' Councils on Aging are eligible for reimbursement. Go to www.bluecrossma.com/medicare to download the form.

Step 5

Keep a Safe Home

A high percentage of falls happen while at home. Clearing tripping hazards, improving the lighting, and making sure stairs are safe by installing safety rails will help make your home a happier, safer place to live. Use the checklist below to help maintain a fall-free home:

Home Safety Checklist		
Yes	No	
		Do you have a clear path to walk easily through rooms?
		Do you have loose throw rugs on the floor?
		Do your floors or stairs have clutter such as magazines, shoes, and boxes that are easy to trip over?
		Are stairwells properly lit?
		Do you have broken or uneven steps anywhere in your home?
		Do you have handrails on both sides of your stairwell?
		Is your tub or shower floor slippery?
		Do you have grab rails in your bathroom?
		In your kitchen, do you often have to reach for items on higher shelves?
		Is the path from your bedroom to the bathroom dark at night?
		Are the lamps next to your bed hard to reach?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, take steps—such as installing nightlights and placing non-slip mats in the tub—to improve safety conditions.

If you have any questions related to falls and how to prevent them, give us a call:

1-800-200-4255 (TTY: 711) | 8:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m.

October 1–February 14 (7 Days a Week)

February 15–September 30 (Monday–Friday)

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ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al **1-800-200-4255 (TTY: 711)**.

ATENÇÃO: Se fala português, encontram-se disponíveis serviços linguísticos, grátis. Ligue para **1-800-200-4255 (TTY: 711)**.

