

Skeehchooash

Pequot for Grasses, Herbs, Medicines

PEQUOT PHARMACEUTICAL NETWORK • PHARMACY NEWSLETTER

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September is National Falls Prevention Awareness Month!

Falls lead to nearly half of traumatic brain injury-related hospitalizations. Falls can affect individuals of all ages and may happen at any time. Unlike other causes of brain injury, such as combat, motor vehicle accidents, and near drowning, falls are not restricted to specific environments. This makes them particularly dangerous.

How can you prevent falls through lifestyle changes?

- **Stay physically active** – Exercising and moving regularly strengthens your muscles and also helps to keep your body parts flexible, minimizing the risk of both falling and being injured by a fall.
- **Get your sight and hearing regularly checked** – Vision and hearing are essential in knowing what is going on around you. Any vision or hearing loss can greatly increase your risk of falling.
- **Check your Vitamin D levels** – A recent study found that a daily dose of vitamin D can reduce the risk of falls in older adults by 19%.
- **Wear appropriate footwear** – Wearing shoes that are uncomfortable, don't fit correctly, or that are not suitable for your environment greatly increases your chances of falling.
- **Review the side effects of the medications that you take with your doctor.** - Many drugs can increase the risk of falls. The more drugs you take, the greater the chance that one or a combination of them will make a fall more likely to happen.
 - Anti-hypertensive medications can cause blood pressure to get too low when you stand up from a lying or sitting position. The result is lightheadedness and feeling faint, which can easily lead to a fall.
 - Medications that suppress the central nervous system are among those most likely to contribute to falling, as they reduce alertness and cause slower reactions and movements. These include: anti-anxiety drugs, antihistamines, medications to treat overactive bladder (such as oxybutynin and tolterodine), tricyclic antidepressants, sleep drugs and narcotics (opioids)
 - Speak with your doctor to ensure you know all the side effects of your medication and ask about alternative options if you have concerns

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/medications-that-increase-your-risk-of-falling>
<https://biausa.org/public-affairs/media/prevent-falls>

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