



# ELDER FALL PREVENTION FOR NATIVE AMERICANS

**#1** FALLS ARE THE TOP  
CAUSE OF INJURY  
DEATHS FOR AMERICAN  
INDIAN ADULTS AGE 65+

SOURCE: CDC WISQARS

**1 IN 3** AMERICAN INDIAN  
ADULTS AGE 45+  
IN NEW MEXICO  
FELL AT LEAST ONE  
TIME IN THE PAST  
12 MONTHS

SOURCE: NEW MEXICO BRFSS  
2012-2016

**45%**

OF AMERICAN INDIAN ADULTS AGE  
45+ IN NEW MEXICO WHO FELL IN  
THE PAST 12 MONTHS WERE INJURED

SOURCE: NEW MEXICO BRFSS 2012-2016



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# MAKING YOUR HOME SAFER

## Living and Dining Rooms

- Arrange furniture for easy movement
- Choose tall furniture for easy standing
- Remove area rugs and other tripping hazards
- Add more lighting to rooms (e.g., ceiling/overhead lights)
- Tuck cords safely away

## Bedrooms

- A lamp should be within easy reach
- Keep a flashlight next to your bed
- Add automatic night lights
- Keep exit route and pathway to bathroom clear

## Kitchen

- Keep frequently used items within easy reach
- Place non-skid mats on tile flooring
- Keep fire extinguisher in assessable location
- Cover all sharp corners with padding

## Bathroom

- Install grab bars in shower
- Some tubs may require a step for easier entry
- Place non-slid mats on floor and in shower or tub
- Use raised toilet seat

## Pathways and Stairs

- Keep free of clutter
- Secure carpets with rug tape or remove completely
- Install handrails
- Have adequate lighting inside and outside the home
- Remove obstacles and hazards along pathways to home entrances
- Remove or roll up power cords



# RISK FACTORS

Most falls are caused by a combination of risk factors. The more risk factors a person has, the greater their chances of falling. Many risk factors can be changed or modified to help prevent falls. They include:



Seeing a healthcare provider can help cut down a person's risk of falling or falling again.

# WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT FALLS



## Do Strength and Balance Exercises Daily

Make your legs stronger and improve your balance through exercises like Tai Chi, walking, yoga, swimming, etc. Check out programs offered by wellness, fitness and senior centers in your community.



## Have Your Eyes Checked

Have your eyes checked by an eye doctor at least once a year, and be sure to update your eyeglasses if needed.



## Make Your Home Safer

Reducing home hazards will assure safer independent living for elders, so follow the tips on page 2 to “fall-proof” your home.



## Talk to your Health Provider

- Request a provider to evaluate your risk for falling
- Ask about things you can do to prevent falls or lower your risk for falling
- Ask your provider or pharmacist to review your medications to see if any might make you dizzy or sleepy
- Ask about taking vitamin D supplements with calcium

## Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) – Fall Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalafety/falls/index.html>

## New Mexico Fall Prevention

<http://healthinsight.org/nm-fall-prevention>

## National Indian Council on Aging

<https://www.nicoa.org/healthy-aging/falls-prevention/>



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