

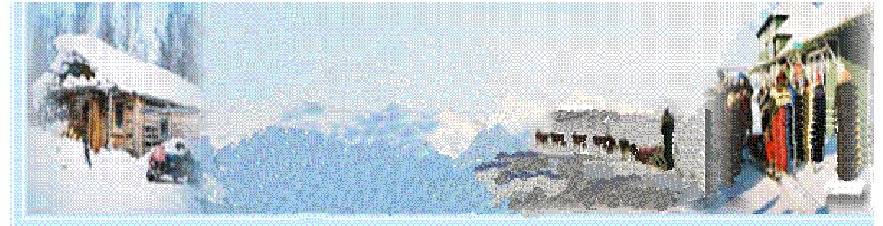


Kay Branch
Elders/Rural Health Services
4000 Ambassador Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99508
Ph: (907) 729-4498
Fax: (907) 729-3652
pkbranch@anmc.org

Injury Prevention Program
4000 Ambassador Drive DCHS
Anchorage, Alaska 99508
Ph: (907) 729-3799 or
(907) 729-3513
Fax: (907) 729-3652
<http://anthc.org/cs/chs/injprev/>

ANMC FALL SAFE-T
(Stop All Falls Everyday Team)
Chair, Nicole Taniguchi, PT
ANMC Physical Therapy
(907) 729-1263
nttaniguchi@anmc.org

Be Strong, Be Healthy



Tips to Prevent Falls to Elders



**Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
Injury Prevention Program**

Preventing Falls Inside Your Home

Stairs and Steps:

- **Are papers, shoes, books, or other things on the stairs?**
Move these things off the stairs. Nothing should be left on the stairs.
- **Are steps broken or uneven?**
Have someone fix your steps as soon as possible.
- **Are stairways dark?**
Have someone put lights at the top and bottom of the stairs.
- **Is there a handrail on the stairs?**
Make sure handrails are on both sides of the stairs and are as long as the stairs.
- **Is the carpet on the stair steps loose or torn?**
Make sure the carpet is firmly attached to every step or remove the carpet and put non-slip rubber bath tub decals on the stairs.



Other Things You Can Do to Prevent Falls

- Have your vision checked at least once a year by an eye doctor.
- Walk often. Walking improves your balance and coordination and makes you stronger.
- Have your doctor or pharmacist look at all medicines you take, even any from the store. Some medicines make you sleepy or dizzy.
- If you drink, be careful. Drinking alcohol increases the chance of falling four times if you are taking medication.
- Get up slowly after you sit or lie down.
- Wear sturdy shoes with thin, non-slip soles indoors; avoid shoes with thick soles.
- Improve the lighting in your home. Use at least 60 watts for good lighting.
- Paint doorsills a different color to prevent tripping on them.
- Put a bell on your small pets so you can hear when they are near and not trip over them.
- Keep your driveway shoveled and clear of toys, tools and other objects. Have a friend help if you cannot do it.

Preventing Falls Outside Your Home

- **Is the path to your door rough, on a hill, have loose gravel or on tundra?**
Boardwalks for a level walking surface outside will help.
- **Do you have a handrail on your stairs and does it wiggle?**
Ask someone to install or repair your rail.
- **Are the stairs difficult to climb?**
Ask someone to install a ramp.
- **In winter, can you see the way to your front door?**
Add lighting to see the path to the door.
- **Are the stairs slippery when wet?**
When repainting the top surface, add sand to the paint . You can put bathtub decals on the bottom of your shoes for increased grip.

Winter Safety Tips:

- Sprinkle dirt, wood chips, spread old towels or clothes, or chop an ice trail to keep from slipping on slick ice.
- Wear ice grippers on your winter boots.
- Have a mop handy at the doors to keep floors dry.
- Watch for ice and snow hanging over entries.

Preventing Falls Inside Your Home

Floors:

- **Is the entry to your home slippery from mud, rain, snow, or ice?**
Use a mat for wiping shoes or keep a broom handy for knocking off snow.
- **When you walk through a room, do you have to walk around furniture?**
Move the furniture to make a clear path in the room.
- **Do you have throw rugs on the floor?**
Throw rugs make people fall. Remove the rugs or use double sided tape so the rugs don't slip.
- **Are papers, magazines, toys, shoes, boxes, or other objects on the floor?**
Pick these things up off the floor and keep them off to avoid trips.
- **Do you have to walk over or around electric cords or wires?**
Tape cords or wires next to the wall so you won't trip.



Preventing Falls Inside Your Home

Bedrooms:

- **Is it hard to reach your bedroom light at night?**
Place a lamp close to the bed or have a night light in the bedroom. Use LCD light tubing trim for lighting the floor.
- **Do you use a cane or walker to help you walk?**
Place it next to the bed when you go to sleep so that you can reach it when you wake up at night.

Bathrooms:

- **Is the tub, steam bath or shower floor slippery?**
Put non-skid mat or bathtub decals on the floor of the tub or shower.
- **Do you need some help or support when you get in and out of the tub?**
Grab bars or a shower chair may prevent falls in the bath.
- **Is it easier to sit while showering than stand?**
Try using an ice cooler for a shower chair.

Preventing Falls Inside Your Home

Kitchen:

- **Are the things you use the most on high shelves?**
Keep things that you use the most on the low shelves where it is easy to get.
- **Is your step stool unsteady?**
Replace step stool with a new one or use a strong wooden box. Never use a chair as a step stool.



Ice grippers like the ones in this picture can help keep you safe when walking on snow and ice. Ask your Health Aide or Doctor how to get a pair.