

WATCH OUT! PREVENT SLIPS & FALLS

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL SPINAL HEALTH MONTH!

Falls are one of the most frequent types of accidents – and often the most dangerous! In 1998, falls in the home and community caused or led to nearly 16,000 deaths. All age groups are vulnerable, but older adults are most at risk. In fact, 80% of those receiving fatal injury are over the age of 65. Protect your spine – and other precious areas – by NOT falling. In recognition of National Spinal Health Month, take a few simple precautions and be kind to your spine.

PERFORM A HOME SAFETY CHECK

Keep the floor clear. Reduce clutter and safely tuck telephone and electrical cords out of walkways.

Keep the floor clean.

Clean up grease, water and other liquids immediately.

Don't wax floors.

Use non-skid throw rugs to reduce your chance of slipping on linoleum. Also, slip-proof footwear can help avoid falls on slick surfaces.

Install handrails in stairways.

Have grab bars in the bathroom (by toilets and in tub/shower.)

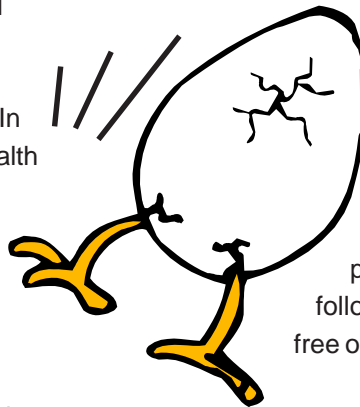
Make sure living areas are well lit. We can all trip and fall in the dark.

Close all drawers after every use.

Watch out for small pets and kids who may get underfoot. Be extra careful when you are carrying groceries or boxes, because you may not see what's on the floor in front of you.

Be aware that climbing and

reaching high places will increase your chance of a fall. Use a sturdy step stool with hand rails – don't teeter on a chair or a pile of boxes. Try not to reach too far to the right or left from your ladder or step stool.



Always keep a night-light on in your bathroom.

KEEPING KIDS SAFE FROM HOME FALLS

You want your home to be safe and secure, but for young children, it may be a minefield of potentially dangerous falls. The following tips will help make your home free of fall hazards for kids:

Don't leave babies alone on beds, changing tables, or sofas.

Always strap children into highchairs and strollers.

Don't let children play alone on fire escapes, high porches or balconies.

Secure area rugs, especially on wood, ceramic tile or linoleum floors. Area rugs can cause anyone to slip up. Secure them with a piece of foam carpet backing, double-sided tape or a rubber pad, available at many carpet and department stores.

Keep stairs clear. Kids must spend as much time running up and down stairs as they do going in and out the back door. As it is, stairs figure in a large percentage of home falls. Combine a child's boundless, yet reckless, energy with a staircase full

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 before duplicating.*

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of junk, and you could end up taking an emergency trip to the hospital.

Use safety gates if there are infants and toddlers in your home. At the top of the stairs, attach the gate to a wall. Avoid accordion gates with large openings — a child's neck can get trapped.

Be aware of the danger of falls from windows by unsupervised young children. Keep your windows closed and locked when children are around. When opening windows for ventilation, open windows that a child cannot reach.

Set and enforce rules about keeping children's play away from windows or patio doors. Falling through the glass can be fatal or cause serious injury.

Keep furniture - or anything children can climb - away from windows. Children may use such objects as a climbing aid.

Never depend on an insect screen to keep your child from falling out of the window. Screens are intended to keep insects out, not children in.

Unguarded windows opened only five inches pose a danger to children under ten. In some cities, landlords are required by law to place window guards in apartments where children live; such guards prevent windows from being opened wide enough for a child to crawl through. Be sure to check with your local fire department and building code official to make sure guards or security bars comply with all applicable requirements.

Always use a rubber mat or slip resistant stickers in the tub. Never leave a child unattended in the tub. Should they slip and fall, they may be unable to cry for help.

IF YOU DO FALL. . .

Try to have as many square inches of your body contact the surface of the floor or ground as possible. This spreads out the impact of the fall on your body. Throw an arm up to avoid landing on your head, but don't try to break a fall with your hands or elbows. Twist or roll your body to land on your side. It's better to land on your buttocks than on your back!

Be sure to visit your doctor of chiropractic IMMEDIATELY after any fall. The sooner you go, the sooner your spine will be healthy and normal again. Chiropractic care, combined with exercise and eating well, will help you reach and maintain optimum wellness.

Thank you to

The National Safety Council (www.nsc.org)
and the American Chiropractic Association
(www.amerchiro.org) for information
used in this newsletter. ♦

FASCINATING TRIVIA ABOUT FALLING YOU NEVER THOUGHT YOU'D KNOW!

♦ In Jewish folklore, amulets made of agate were believed to help horsemen lead charmed lives by warding off fatal falls.

♦ The average raindrop falls at seven miles per hour.

♦ Studies show that if a cat falls off the seventh floor of a building it has about thirty percent less chance of surviving than a cat that falls off the twentieth floor. It supposedly takes about eight floors for the cat to realize what is occurring, relax and correct itself. At about that height it hits maximum speed and when it hits the ground it's rib cage absorbs most of the impact.

♦ An average orange falls just as fast as a skydiver, including wind drag. It's hard to catch in free-fall, though - the 'burble' of disturbed air around the jumper pushes the orange away.

♦ A new film producer was having trouble with a visual gag. It was during the days of silent cinema and he wanted to show a man slipping on a banana skin. He asked the advice of Charlie Chaplin. "Do I show the man first and then the banana skin, or the skin first and then the man? Whichever way I do it, it won't be new to the audience because they've seen it all before." Chaplin thought about this for a while and then replied, "First, show the skin, then show the man, then show the skin once again. Then show the man stepping over the skin and falling down a manhole!"

♦ *Climacophobia*: Fear of stairs, climbing or of falling downstairs.

♦ *Basophobia or Basiphobia*: Inability to stand. Fear of walking or falling.

♦ 13 people are killed every year from falling vending machines.

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