

:: Preventing Falls ::

A simple fall can change your life. Just ask any of the thousands of older men and women who fall each year and break (fracture) a bone. Falls in the work place can cause employees to be severely injured and lose time from work. Falls can happen both on and off the job, but many times falls that happen at home are more serious in nature due to the fact that we may take certain “shortcuts” at home we’re not allowed to take at work. Remember, falls can be prevented using caution, awareness and proper safety procedures.

A broken bone may not sound so terrible; after all, it will heal, right? But as we get older a break can be the start of more serious problems. Keep in mind that as we age a lot of changes occur within our bodies. Our sight, hearing, muscle strength, coordination and reflexes aren’t what they once were. Balance can be affected by diabetes and heart disease or by problems with your circulation, thyroid or nervous system. Some medicines can cause dizziness. Any of these things can make a fall more likely.

Then there’s osteoporosis—a disease that makes bones thin and likely to break easily. Osteoporosis is a major reason for broken bones in women past menopause. It also affects older men. When your bones are fragile, even a minor fall can cause one or more bones to break. Although people with osteoporosis must be very careful to avoid falls, all of us need to take extra care as we get older.

The good news is that there are simple things you can do to help prevent most falls. For a list of suggestions you can use to prevent falls both on and off the job, please open the PATHS safety talk topic “Preventing Slips/Trips/Falls”. As an added safety measure, we suggest that you take the time to share this information with family and friends. Preventing falls is something we all can do if we just give it some thought.