



September 2016

September: National Fall Prevention Month

No matter what your age, falls can be serious. But for people who are older, this is especially true.

When you are older, or have particular diseases like osteoporosis, you are more likely to break a bone if you fall. And these breaks can take longer to heal.

By learning how to prevent falls, you can reduce the risk of injury for yourself and your family.

Why People Fall

A variety of events or conditions can contribute to someone falling. Things like:

- ◆ Drinking alcohol, or taking certain medications.
- ◆ Slipping or tripping on loose or slippery surfaces.
- ◆ Illness.
- ◆ Lack of muscle strength, slow reflexes and problems with balance.

How to Prevent Falls

Just as there are many possible reasons people fall, there are many things you can do to prevent a fall. Here are a few:

- ◆ Wear shoes with non-slip soles and stick with ones that have low heels.
- ◆ Try to avoid slippery surfaces. If the sidewalk is slippery or icy, walk on the grass.
- ◆ Put salt, sand, or kitty litter on slippery areas.
- ◆ Use a cane or walker for support if you are unsteady when walking.
- ◆ Control the clutter – particularly on the floors to reduce trip hazards.
- ◆ Rugs – make sure they are tacked down or have non-slip backings.

- ◆ Install grab bars in bathrooms and showers.
- ◆ Use non-slip bath mats in the shower or tub.
- ◆ Make sure stairs are well lit and have railings on both sides.
- ◆ Get a cordless phone and keep it with you. This reduces the risk of a fall from rushing to answer the phone and allows you to call for help if you do fall.
- ◆ If your doctor gives you the okay, do strengthening and balance exercises.

Reducing the Risk of Breaking a Bone When You Fall

- ◆ If you find yourself losing your balance, try to fall forwards or backwards onto your butt because there is a greater chance of breaking your hip if you fall to the side.
- ◆ Try to use your hands or grab things as you fall to slow down and break your fall.

For more information check out: http://www.niams.nih.gov/health_info/bone/osteoporosis/fracture/prevent_falls_ff.asp#why

Nutrition Nook

Add Flavor to your Food

Good cooking is about enhancing flavor. Brighten up your food with:

- ◆ a squeeze of lemon or lime
- ◆ a sprinkle of fresh herbs
- ◆ a little pepper



Back to School Health Tips

It is back-to-school time. Here are some tips to help keep your kids healthy and learning:

Vaccinations – Are your children and YOU up to date on vaccines? Most schools require vaccinations. Get them early and don't forget your flu vaccine.



Hygiene – Schools are places with lots of people who bring germs to share. Review these simple steps that kids should follow to steer clear of getting sick and bringing germs home:

- wash hands after using bathroom and before eating
- arm them with a small bottle of hand sanitizer for when they can't use soap and water
- teach them not to share food/drinks with their classmates

Sleep – Being well rested is essential to learning. Children and teenagers need more than eight hours a night. Try to gradually shift bedtime early in the week or two before school starts. This helps prepare kids for the earlier wake up of the school day. And, don't let them stay up late on the weekend.

Healthy Foods – It's easy to fall for the convenience of ready-made snacks. Invest a little time to make your child's diet healthy. Load the fridge with healthy fruits & veggies and include whole grain products. Take some time on the weekend to prepare lunch items for the coming week and use leftovers from healthy dinners.

Chicken and Spanish Rice

Makes 5 Servings (1 ½ c. each) Total Calories 425 | Saturated Fat 2g | Protein 29g | Sodium 341mg

Ingredients

- 1 cup onion, chopped
- 1 tsp parsley, chopped
- 5 cups brown rice, cooked in unsalted water
- ¼ cup green bell pepper
- ½ tsp black pepper
- 3½ cups chicken breasts, cooked, skin and bone removed, and diced
- 2 tsp vegetable oil
- 1¼ tsp garlic, minced
- 1 can (8 oz) tomato sauce
- 1 Tb cilantro, chopped (optional)

Directions

1. In large skillet, sauté onions and green peppers in oil for 5 minutes on medium heat.
2. Add tomato sauce and spices. Heat through.
3. Add cooked rice and chicken. Heat through.
4. Serve with chopped cilantro, if desired.



Fit Tip

Having a strong “core” is very important for avoiding back injuries. In your back, the deepest of these core muscles is called the multifidus.

One way to strengthen them is to do alternate leg and arm lifts on your stomach. Having a pillow under your pelvis may help to keep your back from arching too much.

- ◆ Depending on your strength, you may want to start with only your legs.
- ◆ Add the arm lifts later as you feel stronger and more confident.
- ◆ To work the multifidus muscles, imagine you are lifting your tailbone. You should feel the muscles on either side of your spine tighten or “swell.”
 - Stretch and lift your right leg up just enough so your kneecap barely leaves the floor.
 - Be sure your low back does not arch and your hips do not rock.
 - Hold the leg up for about 5 seconds and then lower it.
 - Do the same with your left leg.
 - Continue to alternate lifts doing 10-15 repetitions (1-2 sets).
- ◆ When ready, start lifting the arm opposite of the leg you are lifting – right arm with left leg.
- ◆ Think about reaching out and stretching your body – not just lifting up.

