

Mobility, Falls, and Safe Transfers

Helping your loved one move safely at home

Easy guide for families

This guide does not replace, professional medical advice.

Why this matters

Falls can lead to injury, hospital stays, and loss of independence. Caregivers can lower risk by making the home safer, encouraging steady routines, and using safe body mechanics during transfers.

What you may notice

- Unsteady walking or shuffling steps
- Holding furniture to move around
- Dizziness when standing up
- Weakness after illness or hospitalization
- Fear of falling or refusing to walk

Daily care at home

1. Keep walkways clear, bright, and dry; remove loose rugs and cords.
2. Use supportive shoes, mobility aids, and eyeglasses as prescribed.
3. Stand close during transfers and avoid pulling on the arms.
4. Use a safe lifting technique
5. Encourage short walks, strength exercises

When to call the doctor

- Any fall, even without obvious injury
- Repeated near-falls or new weakness
- Dizziness, fainting, or blacking out
- Pain, bruising, or swelling after a slip
- New need for help standing, walking, or toileting

Call 911 now...

If your loved one is unconscious; has hit their head and is confused; cannot move; has heavy bleeding; or has chest pain or trouble breathing.

(Do not move them if you think they may have a head, neck, back, or hip injury unless there is immediate danger.)

Questions for the care team

- Would physical therapy or occupational therapy help?
- Does this walker or cane fit correctly?
- What exercises are safe at home?

Quick daily checklist

- Walkways are clear and well-lit
- Safe shoes and walking aids are in place
- Check for dizziness or feeling unsteady
- Watch out for reactions to new medication
- Plan safe movement and bathroom help
- Encourage regular activity and balance/strength work

Safety first

If a person starts to fall, guide them down if you can do so safely. Do not try to lift a full-grown adult alone if you may injure yourself or them.

Caregiver reminder

Slow and steady is safer than rushed. A few extra seconds before standing can prevent a painful fall.

