Afraid of falling?  
Build confidence and take control of your fear!

**Things to know about falls.**
- One out of three people over 65 years old will fall each year.
- One out of two people over 85 years old will fall each year.
- Falling can be dangerous. Falls may cause broken bones, hospital visits, loss of the ability to take care of yourself, and sometimes even death.

**Common things that cause people to fall.**
- Decreased or bad eye sight
- Weak muscles
- Trouble keeping balance
- Side effects from medicine
- Bad lighting or dark areas in your house
- Uneven or slippery ground

**Good News:** You can change many of the things listed above. You can reduce your chance of falling!

**What can I do to help stop myself from falling?**
- Schedule an eye check up with your doctor.
- Exercise to improve strength and balance.
- Talk with your doctor about the side effects of your medicine.
- Remove things from the floor of your house that may cause you to trip like rugs, toys, and foot stools.
- Put nightlights in areas of your house where you walk when it is dark.
Where do I start?

1. **Schedule an appointment for a health checkup with your doctor.**
   Make sure to talk with him or her about your fear of falling. Ask about your medicine and if it has any side effects.

2. **Start exercising.** Use the exercises given below to improve your strength and balance. These two skills will help you decrease your chance of falling.

**Exercise 1: Single leg balance**

Stand on one leg for 15 seconds while holding on to something stable as shown in the picture. Repeat 6 times per leg. Try this once in the morning, near breakfast, and once before bed. If 15 seconds is too long at first, start with a shorter time like 5 seconds and add time as this becomes too easy.

**Exercise 2: Sit to stand**

Use a chair like the one in the picture that is stable and has armrests. Sit down in the chair and immediately stand back up. Repeat sitting and standing 10-15 times. Do this once in the morning and once at night. If 10-15 times is too hard, do as many as you can safely each time you try.

If you feel dizzy at any time during exercise 1 or 2 sit down until you feel better.

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**Other things to try!**

- Community health programs
- Aquatic exercise
- Physical therapy

Make sure to ask your doctor about how to sign up.

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**References:**

