

PREVENTING VISION-RELATED FALLS IN SENIORS

As we age, so do our eyes. Aging eyes can mean decreased sharpness in our vision, an inability to distinguish between shades, problems with glare, slower adaptation to darkness and reductions in how much of our surroundings can be seen at one time. Any one of these changes increases the risk of a fall and it's the first consideration in falls prevention.



Considering age-related eye disease

AGE-RELATED MACULAR DEGENERATION (AMD), CATARACTS, GLAUCOMA AND DIABETIC RETINOPATHY¹

are the major causes of vision impairment that result in falls. These eye diseases increase the risk because they can affect the following:

Balance ● Motor perception ● Reaction time ● Visual attention



Seniors with low vision are **2.5 times** more likely to fall than those without it.²

Compounding the issue, vision loss is linked to decreased physical activity, which leads to a risk for falls³ and an increased fear of falls, which in turn increases seniors' risk of social isolation.⁴



Between **20-30%** of seniors fall each year.⁵

Falls remain the leading cause of injury-related hospitalizations among Canadian seniors.

- Approximately **30%** of individuals aged 65 and older fall every year⁶
- Among those aged 80 and over, the risk of falls increases to **45%**.⁷



FOCUS ON PREVENTION: What can you do?

See your optometrist annually for a comprehensive eye exam.⁸



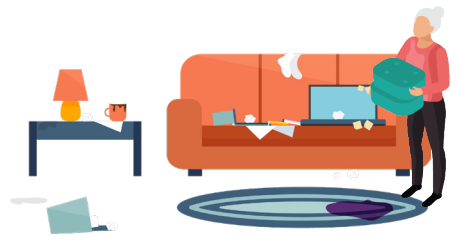
Wear your glasses when you need them and update your prescriptions.

Ask your optometrist for information about low vision rehabilitation exercises and/or services.

Wear sunglasses to reduce glare.

Install good lighting inside and outside your home.

Decrease clutter in your home to reduce the risk of not seeing items in your path.



References