

## THE PROGRAM

The No More Falls Program is a pilot program of the Aptos-La Selva Fire District. Its mission is to help the community of Aptos prevent the falls that make up a large part of the calls for emergency ambulances.

The program consists of a do-it-yourself safety checklist and a list of community resources available to all communities in Santa Cruz County. Aptos-La Selva Fire District also offers free home evaluations for Aptos community residents.

For more information, please call  
831-685-6690

## LIST OF RESOURCES

Additional copies of this checklist or a list of community resources is available through the Aptos-La Selva Fire District.

## About No More Falls

*No More Falls is a pilot program of the Aptos/La Selva Fire District and American Medical Response in partnership with the Santa Cruz County Emergency Medical Care Commission.*

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**APTOS/LA SELVA FIRE DISTRICT**

831-685-6690

# No More Falls



**HOME CHECKLIST**

## FLOORS

- ❑ **Throw rugs** – these can slip and cause falls  
Remove them or  
Place double-stick tape on the back or  
Get nonskid rug backings in pad or brush-on form (Kmart, Walmart, online)
- ❑ **Highly polished wooden floors** can be slippery; Consider wall-to-wall carpeting or add throw rugs with nonskid backings.
- ❑ **Furniture in the way**  
Re-arrange the furniture so that you have a clear path in and out.
- ❑ **Objects on the floor** – books, plants, boxes, etc. – you can trip on them or lose your balance. Move them – keep objects off the floor.
- ❑ **Wiring** – wires or cables can trip you or make you lose your balance.  
Coil or tape wires and cords so they're next to the wall. Never run cords or wires across a pathway. If needed, have an electrician add more outlets.

## STAIRS, STEPS, HALLWAYS

- ❑ **Lighting** – dim lighting can cause you to put a foot wrong.  
Make sure light reaches the entire area. If needed, have more lights added, or use nightlights.  
Use long-lasting bulbs so they don't have to be changed as often.  
Replace burned-out bulbs promptly.  
Have light switches at both top and

bottom of stairways and both ends of hallways. Get the switches that glow in the dark.

- ❑ **Condition** – loose or worn steps or carpeting can cause falls.  
Have handrails on both sides of stairways, if possible, that are as long as the stairway. Check that your existing handrails are firmly attached.  
Make sure your steps are not cracked or broken or have loose nails or boards.  
Carpeting or nonskid runners should not have holes or loose threads. On stairways, consider replacing carpeting with secured rubber treads.  
On steps without carpeting, consider installing glow-in-the-dark strips.

## KITCHEN/EATING AREAS

- ❑ **Paths** aren't clear – you have to step over or around things to get to your appliances or eating area.  
Get rid of any obstructions.
- ❑ **Mats**  
Make sure all mats in the kitchen are nonskid or have nonskid backing.
- ❑ **Location of Most-Used Items**  
Make sure the items you use most often are stored on the lower shelves where you can reach them easily.
- ❑ **Step stool**  
Never use a chair as a step stool. Make sure your step stool is in good condition, has a bar you can hold onto while you're

on it, and that you are able to lift and move it.

## BATHROOMS

- ❑ **Rugs**  
Make sure any rugs in the bath area are nonskid or have nonskid backing.
- ❑ **Slippery tiles** or porcelain tub or shower  
Add a nonskid rubber mat
- ❑ **Handholds** – Have grab bars installed in the bath or shower and next to the toilet. Never use a wall-mounted sink for balance; it won't hold your weight.
- ❑ **Lighting**  
Add a nightlight in case the lightbulb burns out or the power goes out.

## BEDROOMS

- ❑ **Lighting**  
Make sure there's a lamp next to the bed on either side so you can reach it easily.  
Install a night light so that you can find the bathroom quickly.  
Keep a charged flashlight next to the bed in case the power goes out.
- ❑ **Path**  
Make sure the way in and out of the room is clear of cords or objects that can trip you.
- ❑ **Communication**  
Make sure there is a phone next to the bed for emergencies.

## OTHER THINGS YOU CAN DO

- ❑ **Medication** – Have your doctor or pharmacist review all of your medications, including over-the-counter items. Some can make you dizzy or sleepy. And some combinations should be avoided.
- ❑ **Furniture** – firm chairs with arm rests are easier to get in and out of. Add pillows to the back, if needed, to make sure your feet touch the floor.
- ❑ **Take Your Time** – standing up quickly can make you dizzy and lose your balance. Get up from chairs or from lying down slowly.
- ❑ **Stable footwear** – avoid wearing floppy sandals or slippers
- ❑ **Vision** – have your eyes checked every year – poor vision can cause falls.
- ❑ **Spills** – make sure to wipe up spills as soon as they happen so you don't slip in them.
- ❑ **Emergency Numbers** – make a list of numbers for emergencies and keep them posted where they will be handy.
- ❑ **Exercise** – A few simple exercises done daily will improve your strength, balance, and coordination, and make a fall less likely.

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