



Caregivers Falls Prevention

Medications

As a caregiver, it is as important to take care of yourself as it is to care for others. Prescriptions, over the counter medicines, herbal supplements, and other substances can increase a person's falls risk. Medications that are known to increase the risk of falling include sleeping pills, anxiety or depression medications, and medications that can suddenly lower blood pressure. If you take four or more different types of medications regularly, you may be at a greater risk of falling.

Managing your medications safely is one way that you can reduce your risk of a fall. A few ways that you can do this include:

- Knowing when, how, and how much of each medication to take.
- Use a pillbox to keep track of the medicines you need to take each day – there are many options, including some that have boxes for AM and PM medications.
- Move slowly and pause before you get out of bed or a chair.
- Avoid foods, alcohol, and other medications that can interact with your prescribed medications – including over-the-counter medicines and herbal supplements.



It is also important you are getting enough calcium and vitamin D. Vitamin D comes from the sunlight. Wisconsin's cold and cloudy winters can make it hard for us to get enough vitamin D from the sun year-round. Vitamin D and calcium supplements may interact with certain medications. Talk with your provider or pharmacist about possible interactions between your medications and these supplements.

Alcohol and other mind-altering substances can also increase your risk of falling. Alcohol can affect your reaction time, coordination, and balance. Additionally, medication you take may have negative interactions when they are mixed with alcohol, increasing your falls risk even more. Other substances, such as marijuana, can also impact your falls risk, interact with your medications, and impair your judgment and balance.

If you are unsure about medications or supplements you are taking, you can make an appointment for a medication review the next time you fill your prescriptions. Remember, your provider and pharmacist are there to help you! You can find more information on medications and other substances, and how you can reduce your fall risk at <https://fallsfreewi.org/prevent-falls/medications/>.

