



IMG PHYSICAL THERAPY

805 N RICHMOND STREET, SUITE 103, FLEETWOOD, PA 19522
PHONE: 610-944-8140 FAX: 610-944-8190 IMGPT.COM
CHRIS GORDOS, DPT ERIC PARRISH, MPT ANDREA MILLER, DPT

Causes for Falls in and around the Home

There are a lot of different reasons why people fall. Some of the most common are because people lack the appropriate reaction time, strength, and range of motion in their joints to adequately catch themselves especially as they get older. These issues are something that physical therapy can help to improve.

The problem with falls is they can result in serious life-threatening complications such as broken bones or head injuries. Often, falls will occur in the home since a significant portion of later life is spent at home. There are several household items and locations that place older adults (age 65 and over) at a greater risk of falls^{1,2}:

- Objects on the floor such as baby/dog toys, shoes, dropped items
- Uneven floors
- Broken or uneven stairs
- Pets such as dogs or cats that commonly stand or walk in front someone
- Throw rugs especially ones that fold up or bend and create an obstacle
- Location: shower or tub where there are no grab bars
- Location: bathroom/toilet without grab bars nearby
- Location: kitchen with wet or slippery floors



Additional personal factors that put older adults at greater risk of falls are:

older age (the older you are the higher the risk), being female, muscle weakness, difficulties with walking and maintaining balance, vision issues, lack of sensation in your feet (neuropathy), foot pain that causes changes in walking pattern, taking greater than 4 medications (especially those that affect the brain such as anti-depressants), history of falls, fear of falling, arthritis in the leg joints, urinary incontinence, and requiring a walking device or assistance.²⁻⁴

Some of these factors can be adequately addressed by a skilled physical therapist to reduce your chances of falling. Ask your physical therapist about changes to your home layout that can reduce falls so your chance for injury is decreased!

