

## Are you afraid of falling?

Falling can be a serious risk to your health and safety. As we age our risk of falling becomes greater. There are multiple factors that can cause falls. For example, reduced vision or hearing, decreased muscle and bone strength, poor balance and unsafe conditions in your home can all increase your chance of falling.

According to the Public Health Agency of Canada, falls are the leading cause of injury among older Canadians; are the cause of 85% of seniors' injury-related hospitalizations with close to half of those falls happening at home.

Alicia Trevisonn is a Registered Physiotherapist at Bridges Community Health Centre and suggests a few ways to prevent falls:

- Take your time when walking or getting up
- Keep stairs and walkways free of clutter, ice or snow
- Use handrails and grab bars
- Keep an eye on your vision
- Check your medication as some may make you prone to dizziness and falling
- Ensure proper lighting through your home
- Wear proper footwear
- Exercise for strength and balance

If you do fall:

- Try to land on your buttocks to prevent more serious injuries
- Take your time. Make sure you are not injured before trying to get up or before letting others help you get up
- Do not let the fear of falling again prevent you from being active. Inactivity will increase your risk of falling

Bridges CHC offers walking programs and low-impact exercise classes that focus on strengthening muscles, promoting balance and can be completed while seated or holding onto a chair. For a complete list of exercise programs that are free and open to everyone, to learn more or to register, please call ahead by visiting

[www.bridgeschc.ca](http://www.bridgeschc.ca).

**AUTHOR BIO:** *Alicia Trevisonn is a Registered Physiotherapist at Bridges Community Health Centre. Bridges CHC serves the communities of Fort Erie, Port Colborne and Wainfleet. For more information on Bridges CHC, visit: [bridgeschc.ca](http://bridgeschc.ca).*