



## **Stay On Your Feet...**

# **STEP 7 Regularly Check Your Eyesight and Hearing**

## **Eyesight**

Visit an eye care professional (optometrist or ophthalmologist) every two years to detect and manage any changes to your eyesight. Most changes are gradual so you may not notice them immediately, but if left untreated, poor eyesight will increase your risk of falling.

### **Do simple eye checks yourself**

Look at different targets and cover one eye and then the other to see if your vision is changing.

- Does it take longer to read street signs when driving?
- Do you see fewer fine details when looking at nearby objects?
- Is it difficult to see furniture in a room with poor light?

### **Look after your eyesight**

- Have your vision tested regularly, at least every two years and more often if you notice that your sight is changing, blurred or cloudy.
- Have your eyewear checked annually by your optometrist.
- Make sure you wear your prescribed eyewear as recommended.
- Allow up to two weeks to get used to new eyewear, particularly bifocals or multifocals. If you still have problems after two weeks, return to your optometrist.
- If you wear bifocal or multifocal glasses, be careful walking up and down stairs and when stepping off curbs.
- Eat a balanced diet with yellow and green vegetables. They are high in vitamins A and E, which are important for maintaining good eyesight.
- Take breaks often when you are doing close work, like reading or sewing.
- Give your eyes time to adjust when you move into a darker or brighter area.

## **Stay Active, Stay Independent and Stay On Your Feet!**



For more information on the 9 steps, call:

**Stay On Your Feet North Bay** 705 474-1400

**Stay On Your Feet Parry Sound** 705 746-5801

1 800-563-2808

## Watch for changes to your eyesight

Some people think if they can still read the newspaper or watch television their eyesight is fine. This is not necessarily true. Some eye disorders may be temporary, like those from changes in your blood pressure or increased pressure in your eyeball. These conditions may reduce your vision for 5 to 10 minutes. If you have any of the following changes, talk to your doctor as soon as possible:

- Blurred or less detailed vision
- Watering of the eyes
- Eyes taking longer to adjust to light changes, especially in the dark
- Greater sensitivity to glare
- Less accuracy when judging distances and depth
- Loss of ability to see well in low contrast light
- Eye disorders such as cataracts, glaucoma or macular degeneration

## Hearing

### What causes hearing difficulties?

- Wax build up in the ear
- Hearing aids that are dirty, have old batteries or are no longer appropriate for your hearing loss
- Certain medications
- Inner ear problems
- Conditions such as Tinnitus (ringing or buzzing in the ears) or Ménière's disease

### What you can do

- If you think you have wax build up in your ear, talk to your doctor
- Talk to your doctor if you have trouble hearing
- Learn to care for your hearing aid
- Clean your hearing aids often and check batteries regularly
- When in a public place, try to sit in a corner to reduce noise



# How am I protecting my eyesight and hearing?

Review what you are doing to protect your eyesight and hearing and complete the table below. An example is given to help.

**What positive steps am I already taking?**

*I have my eyes tested each year*

**What changes might help me stay on my feet?**

*I need to mark the edge of the steps at the back door with bright paint*

*When I come inside from doing the gardening, I will sit down for a few minutes to help my eyes adjust to the light inside the house*

**How will I make these changes? Is there anyone I need to contact?**

*I'll make an appointment with my optometrist to get my glasses checked*

**Who else do you know who would benefit from this information?**