



## Falls: No laughing matter (continued)

- **Keep an updated list of all your medications and have it reviewed periodically.** Four out of five older adults take at least one prescription medication each day, and more than one-third take five or more daily. While medications are taken to improve sleep, blood pressure, mental health or chronic pain, the side effects from these can result in a fall. Medications often change the way you feel or think, and each time your doctor prescribes a new medication it may increase your risk of falling. As you get older, not only do medications change, but also medicines change the way they affect your body (similar to food and drinks). Look for changes in vision, concentration, muscle strength, balance, reaction time, alertness, fainting, sleepiness, or blood pressure. Ask your provider about taking vitamin D supplements to improve bone, muscle and nerve health.

*[This article was originally published in the University of Nevada Reno, Nevada Today NSights on Sept. 14, 2020.](#)*

If you are at low risk for falls and want to decrease your risk of falling later in life, try simple chair exercises at home (exercise link provided). This will strengthen your legs and buttocks through repeated standing and sitting. Activities such as these may delay or reverse loss of independence, allowing you to continue your activities of daily living (ADLs).

<https://www.cdc.gov/steadi/pdf/STEADI-Brochure-ChairRiseEx>.

### Make your home safer:

- Minimize clutter and tripping hazards from stairs and places where you walk.
- Remove small rugs or use double-sided tape to secure.
- Keep items you use often within reach to reduce the need for stepping stools.
- Place grab bars inside and outside of the tub, shower, or toilet area; use non-slip mats in bathrooms.
- Have handrails and lights installed on all staircases.
- Improve lighting and replace broken/burned out bulbs.

Check out: [cdc.gov/STEADI-Brochure-CheckForSafety-508.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/STEADI-Brochure-CheckForSafety-508.pdf).

### Exercise to improve your balance, center of gravity and strength.

The 2018 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans Scientific Report provides strong evidence that physical activity reduces the risk of fall-related injuries in older adults by 32 to 40%, and that using various modes or combinations of physical activity provides the most benefits. Some examples of recommended activities are:

- ✓ resistance or muscle strength training,
- ✓ cardio-endurance or aerobic activities, such as walking or dancing,
- ✓ balance activities - Tai Chi, Pilates, or Yoga.

*Falls Prevention Week is Sept. 20-24, 2021. Help us raise awareness by sharing this newsletter. Remember, falls ARE preventable and NOT a normal part of aging.*

## Bow Tie Pasta with Zucchini Sauce

- Ingredients:**
- 2 cups whole wheat bow tie pasta, cooked
  - 1 small clove garlic, peeled and minced
  - 2 medium zucchini, peeled and grated
  - 1 Tablespoon canola oil
  - ½ cup Parmesan cheese, grated
  - ¼ teaspoon salt and a pinch of black pepper

For nutrition information, please search [Bow Tie Pasta](#) at [CookingMatters.org/recipes](https://CookingMatters.org/recipes).



**Directions:** Measure 2 cups grated zucchini. In large skillet over medium heat, heat oil. Add zucchini and minced garlic. Cook until mixture softens and zucchini yields some liquid, about 5-minutes. Drain pasta, reserving ½ cup cooking liquid. Add 1-2 teaspoons cooking liquid to zucchini mixture. Add drained pasta. Stir, coating pasta evenly with sauce. Add more pasta water as needed. Transfer pasta to large bowl for serving. Sprinkle with grated Parmesan. Season with salt and pepper. Toss to combine. (Serves 6, 2/3 cup per serving)

An EEO/AA institution. This material was funded, in part, by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), an equal opportunity provider.

