

Prevention is best policy to avoid injuries around the house

Question: I have injured my low back two times after falls at my home. What suggestions can you give to avoid slip and fall injuries?

Answer: Most slip and fall injuries occur on wet flooring, usually in the bathroom or kitchen. When your feet slide out from underneath you your most common landing zones are your buttocks or head. Grabbing for the floor with your hands is common and this may result in a wrist or elbow injury. Anti-slip surfaces do help, but once moisture is on a flat surface, especially without prior knowledge, danger lurks. Prevention in these situations of wet flooring would be to make sure you don't have any leaks or wet surfaces on a regular basis. When you notice a problem area, fix it immediately because someone else in your household may not see it.

Slippery steps and ladders would rank up on top of the list of causes of fall injuries. Aging carpets or decaying wood can grab a shoe or foot and send the victim sprawling in any direction. Falling from a height adds a new dimension of danger and potential injury. Forward falls can create facial or cranial injuries as well as whiplash to the neck and back. Landing hard on your tailbone on a hard step is very dangerous and can cause a fractured coccyx bone, compress a lumbar vertebra or herniated a lumbar disc. Always have good lighting and rails whenever possible. Fix or replace old carpet or flooring.

Review each room in your home independently. Visualize all activity that occurs in each room, how the furniture is arranged and make appropriate ergonomic changes to minimize future potential injuries.

Should an injury occur such as a back or joint trauma, as long as it is not life threatening, your chiropractor would be a good first choice to help you.

Quote of the week: *“You must change in order to survive.”* — Pearl Bailey