

## Agenda and Objectives

1. Welcome & outline — review today's agenda
2. Exercise review
3. Review home fall hazards homework
4. Vision and falls

BREAK

5. Footwear audit
6. Community mobility & pedestrian safety
7. Homework

### **The main objectives of this session are:**

1. To keep advancing the exercises and make them a part of my daily routine.
2. To understand how vision can influence getting around safely.
3. To understand defensive walking and how to scan ahead.
4. To learn ideas about personal safety when moving about the local community.
5. To be able to list the features of a safe shoe.

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## **Vision and Falling**

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### **Have your eyes checked at least every two years**

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#### **Vision**

We all get used to living with ‘not quite’ perfect eyesight — we learn to live with it. So:

1. Have your eyes checked by an eye specialist or optometrist. Many of us would see much better with new glasses.
2. Clean your glasses regularly. They get very dirty just by being used. This can be done with soap or detergent in the kitchen, sink, or even in the shower. You’ll be amazed at the difference.

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#### **Moving Around**

1. When walking, look about 6 steps ahead to give you time to adjust your steps to potential hazards.
2. When coming in from outside, pause to let your eyes adjust. Take off your sunglasses when coming inside.

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#### **Lighting**

Buy 75 or 100 watt bulbs or compact fluorescent bulbs that match this higher wattage.

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### At Home

1. Clutter can make it harder to see hazards. Make sure your hallways, porches, and verandas are free from unnecessary items. Don't use thoroughfares as storage areas.
2. Get rid of furniture with casters, such as mobile TV stands, or furniture with wide legs that stick out and intrude into the traffic ways where you walk.
3. Check that there is enough color contrast between furniture and walls/curtains. For example, a white coffee table on a white carpet is easy to trip over.

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### Cataracts

If you have cataracts and have had a fall, see your doctor and talk about an early referral for treatment. Cataracts can make it difficult to see when moving around, and research shows a link between cataracts and falls. Some lighting conditions, such as glare, also can make it harder to see with cataracts.

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### Bifocals & Multifocals

Bifocals are good for seeing long and short distances at the same time but also can make it harder to see sidewalk and step edges. Be cautious and learn to adjust the angle of your head to help you see better.

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## **Night Vision**

Everyone's vision is worse in the dark. At night, because your vision is worse, your balance may worsen too. You may also become disoriented in the dark. It is important to use some kind of lighting at night. Photosensitive lights that plug into the outlet are a good idea. Install light switches at both the top and bottom of stairways. When going outside at night, go slowly to give your eyes time to adjust, and use a cane or walking stick.

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## **If Glare Is a Problem:**

1. Buy inexpensive shades or lace curtains to cover windows to shield from the sun in the summer.
2. Reduce glare by checking for reflective surfaces and unshielded light bulbs.
3. Halogen lighting gives a bright but diffuse lighting and can reduce glare.
4. Wear a hat outside and sunglasses that are suitable for you.

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**An eye specialist can give you low-vision aids to make the best use of your vision.**

**Wear your glasses and have regular check-ups.**

## What Is a Safe, Comfortable Shoe?

### **A supportive shoe**

- Firm arch support
- Sole that is flexible under ball of foot and not too thick
- Covers most of foot
- A lightweight shoe
- Roomy toe box for comfort
- Lace or Velcro fastenings for stability



### **A good fit**

- At least half an inch between the longest toe and the inside of the shoe
- Holds foot well back into the shoe
- Snug, firm grip at heel counter

### **A sole that grips**

- Non-slip rubber sole
- Textured for grip, with broken border

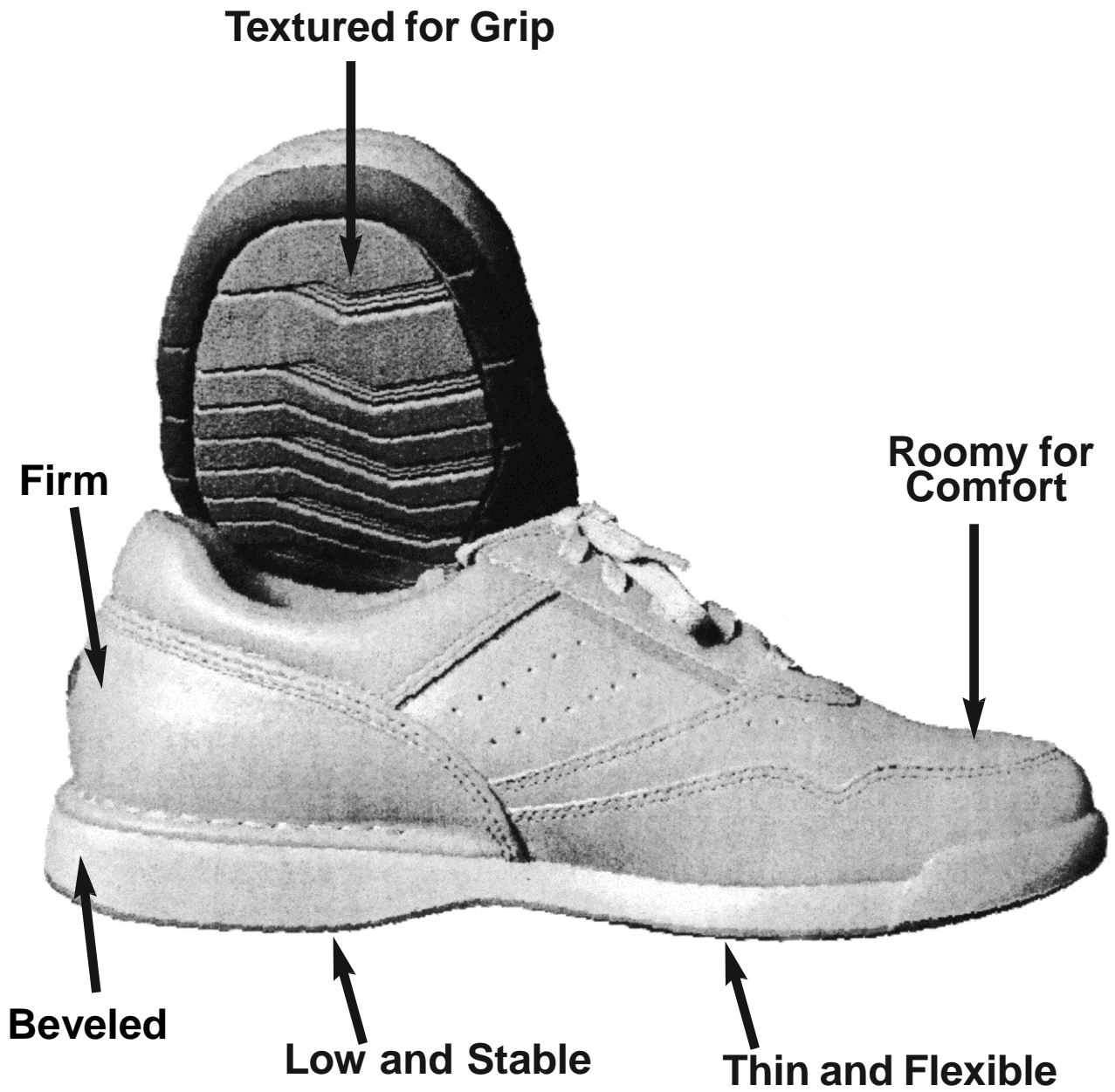
### **A heel that is stable AND grips**

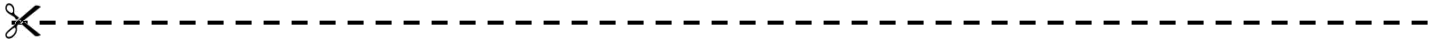
- Non-slip and textured
- Low heel (less than 1 to 2 inches)
- Beveled heel
- Broad heel (at least 2 inches) with rounded edge

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**Safe Footwear**

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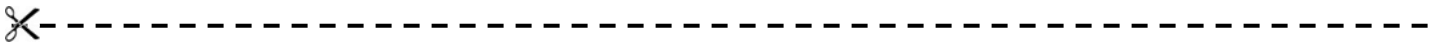


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## **Shoe Audit**

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- Support
- Fit
- Sole
- Heel

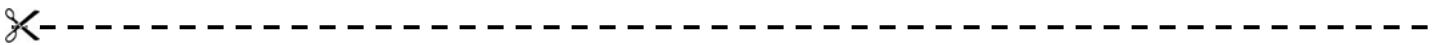


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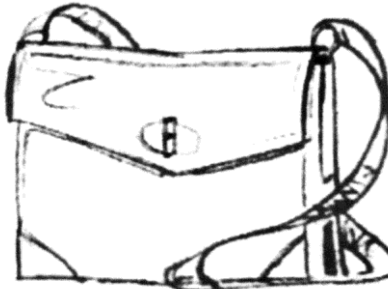


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## Strategies to Increase Personal Safety

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- Carry your purse close to your side. Keeping it close to your body and your arm over it makes it a little harder for someone to grab the purse.
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- Men should carry their wallets in the front pocket for greater security.
  - Always keep the purse zipped up.
  - Do not leave your purse or wallet unattended.
  - Do not put wallet, purse, or keys in your backpack.
  - Do not carry lots of cash.
  - What is in the purse or wallet? If it is important, photocopy it (as you would if going overseas).
  - Have your keys ready before you get to the car or front door.
  - Do not mark keys with your address.
  - Tie your key on a rubber band and pin it under your blouse or shirt so that it is easy to reach — if your purse is stolen, you won't lose your keys.
  - Investigate local self-defense courses for older people.



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## **Moving about Safely**

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### **Outdoor walking**

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#### **Be Alert to Hazards**

1. Cracks and uneven sidewalks.
  2. Holes, dips, and rocks when walking on grass.
  3. Snow and ice. A covered patch of ice or a pothole filled with snow may cause a slip or fall.
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#### **Walking Safely**

1. Scan ahead as you walk.
  2. Heel-and-toe as you walk.
  3. Keep your head up, chin in, and shoulders back. This helps you to look ahead and walk with confidence.
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#### **Getting around the community safely**

1. Wear sturdy shoes. Consider traction devices for your shoes in the winter.
2. Use the handrails.
3. Cross only at the lights and when the sign reads “walk.” If the light starts to flash “don’t walk” when you’re already crossing, don’t panic and rush across the street but continue crossing at a safe speed.
4. Make eye contact with the driver before you cross the road, even on a pedestrian crossing.
5. Cross the road with a group.

### **Be extra careful in windy weather and when there is snow or ice**

1. Wear bright-colored clothing and carry a yellow or bright-colored umbrella.
2. If you feel unsteady, remember to ask for help — it's a sign of strength, not weakness.
3. Plan ahead for outings so you don't have to rush.
4. Take slower, smaller steps when walking over snow or ice.
5. Keep sidewalks and driveways well shoveled. Apply rock salt, other ice melting products, or sand to create traction on wet or icy patches. If needed, get help with shoveling or plowing after a storm.

**SLIPPERY SAM  
AWARD**



**CONGRATULATIONS FOR  
CHOOSING SAFE FOOTWEAR!**

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## Exercise Log

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Week (please circle the week number — circle one)

1   2   3   4   5   6   7

**Check — if I did my exercises this week**

**Balance Exercises** (daily):

Monday    Tuesday    Wednesday    Thursday  
 Friday    Saturday    Sunday

**Strength Exercises** (3 times a week – be sure you have one day of rest between strength exercises):

Monday    Tuesday    Wednesday    Thursday  
 Friday    Saturday    Sunday