

MyMobility Plan

What can you do to stay independent?

As we age, we can share wisdom and history with our families and communities. We can help future generations protect their own physical, spiritual, emotional, and mental health. Keeping safe and maintaining our own health can help our family and tribal community in meaningful ways.

It can be hard to talk about, but physical changes over time can affect our mobility—our ability to get around. These changes can make it harder to do things we want or need to do—like driving, shopping, doing household chores, and seeing our loved ones.

We can plan ahead for these changes to stay safe and independent longer. You might not have mobility problems now, but you could in the future.

You may know others who already do—perhaps a parent, relative, member of your tribe, or friend. You—or your loved ones—can take steps today that will help you stay safe and independent tomorrow.

The MyMobility Plan is a tool to help you plan for those changes and take action now. This planning guide includes checklists, tips, and resources to help you stay safe and mobile in the years to come. You can work through the plan by yourself or with your healthcare provider, family member, member of your tribe, or friend.



There may come a time when you can no longer drive, but still need to get around.



MySelf
Plan to stay healthy



MyHome
Plan to stay safe at home



MyCommunity
Plan to get where you want to go

Plan today.
Stay independent **tomorrow.**



You can maintain your mobility by staying healthy and managing chronic conditions. As you get older, you may have more visits with doctors or other healthcare providers to keep track of changes in your health. You also may need to focus on exercises that keep you strong and increase your balance. Complete the checklist here to get started.



MyMobility Tip



The lenses used for reading in bifocal glasses can change how you judge step heights and can lead to falls. Consider using a second pair of single lens glasses to prevent falls when outside of the home.

Get a checkup or wellness visit each year.

If you don't have a regular healthcare provider, find one at www.ih.gov/findhealthcare. Some treatable health issues (such as arthritis or balance problems) may increase your risk of being in a car crash or falling. You can check your fall risk at home using bit.ly/falls-free-checkup and share results with your healthcare provider. Think about your checkups or wellness visits:

Last Exam Date: _____

Next Exam Date: _____

Take care of your mental health.

Stay connected with family and friends, do things you enjoy, and talk to a healthcare provider, counselor, or traditional healer. Find a provider at www.ih.gov/findhealthcare. Social isolation and conditions such as depression may increase your risk of falling. Who are some caring people you can talk or visit with?

Get a medical eye exam each year.

Untreated eye problems can increase your risk of falling or being in a car crash.

Last Eye Exam Date: _____

Next Eye Exam Date: _____

Get a hearing exam.

Untreated hearing loss may affect your safety while driving or cause balance issues that can lead to a fall.

Last Hearing Exam Date: _____

Next Hearing Exam Date: _____

Be physically active with a focus on increasing your strength and balance.

Doing strength and balance activities at least 3 times a week can reduce your risk of falling. These activities can be done on your own or with other people. You can do them at home, at a gym, at a local community center, or outdoors. Activities like walking and stretching are good for you but do not reduce your risk of falling. Find examples of strength and balance activities and tracking tools at:

bit.ly/IHS-Physical-Activity

and bit.ly/health-tracking-tools.

Find tips for exercising safely outdoors at: bit.ly/NIH-outdoor-exercise.

Review all your medications regularly with your healthcare provider, such as a doctor or pharmacist.

Certain medications can affect your ability to drive, walk, or get around safely. This includes some over-the-counter medications. Learn more at: bit.ly/CDC-MedicinesRisk.



MyMobility Tip



Review your health insurance plan to understand benefits. Medicare plans may cover the cost of exercise programs like *SilverSneakers™* or *Silver&Fit.®*

What can I do next?

Talk to your healthcare provider about your risk of falling or any concerns about driving.



Injuries from falling can reduce your ability to stay mobile and independent.

You can help prevent falls in your home by making small changes and removing things that may cause you to trip. Set aside time to go through the following home safety checklist to find changes that you can make to your home. Consider having a friend or family member go through this checklist with you. Decide if you need help with a project and what tools you would need. If you need help, see if there are organizations in the community that provide materials, funds, or help with installations. Call 211 or contact your local Tribal office to find out about these programs.

Check the floors, stairs, and lighting in each room, including any basements, garages, porches, or entryways.

- Keep objects, such as purses, laundry baskets, and children's toys, off the floor.
- Remove or tape down rugs.
- Coil or tape cords and wires next to the wall and out of the way.
- Check for loose or uneven stairs. Repair if needed.
- Make sure carpet is firmly attached to every stair or remove carpet and attach non-slip rubber treads.
- Check for loose or broken handrails. Repair if needed.
- Install handrails on both sides of stairs if needed.



MyMobility Tip



Falls are more likely when you are wearing socks indoors or footwear that does not cover the heel, such as flip flops. Wear safe shoes that fit well, with a firm heel to provide stability, and a textured sole to prevent slipping—even when inside your home.

- Use overhead lighting at the top and bottom of stairs and consider adding light switches at both the top and bottom of stairs.
- Add bright lightbulbs to fixtures. More information on choosing how to light specific rooms is available here: bit.ly/light-health.

Check the kitchen:

- Put often-used items within easy reach.
- Use a step stool with a non-slip surface and a bar to hold on to when retrieving hard-to-reach items. Never use a chair as a step stool.

Check the bedrooms:

- Place lamps near the bed so they are within reach when you are in bed.
- Put in night-lights to see where you are walking in the dark. Consider battery-operated lights for areas that do not have electrical outlets. Also consider motion sensor night-lights.

Check the bathrooms:

- Put non-slip rubber mats or self-stick strips on the floor of the tub or shower.
- Install grab bars for support getting in or out of the tub or shower and up from the toilet.

MyMobility Tips for Outside the Home

Falls from outdoor ladders can be especially dangerous. Think about asking someone to help or hiring someone for chores like cleaning gutters and putting up holiday lights.

Snow and ice can increase outdoor falls. Make a plan to have snow removed from your sidewalks and entryways after snowfall. A thin layer of sand or cat litter can help prevent slipping on ice.

**What can I do next?**

Find more home modification information and resources at go.usa.gov/xUEs3 and bit.ly/home-fit-guide.





Your transportation needs may change as you age. You might get to a point when you are not comfortable driving in certain situations, like at night. Eventually you might not be able to safely drive. Physical changes such as joint problems may make it hard to walk places or use a bus.

We all need transportation for practical reasons like grocery shopping and medical appointments, but we also need it to spend time with friends and loved ones. Staying social helps us maintain our quality of life. The following steps can help you maintain independence and connections as you age.



MyMobility Tip



Staying focused while driving is important for everyone. Avoid distractions in your car—or other vehicles such as boats or ATVs—such as listening to a loud radio, talking or texting on your phone, and eating. Set up navigation and adjust your mirrors and radio before you start driving, not while you are on the road.

Do you drive?

- Learn tips to drive safely while aging:
 - NHTSA bit.ly/driving-safely-aging
 - AAA bit.ly/senior-driving-safety
- Consider a driver refresher course. Some insurers give a discount on your car insurance for taking a course:
 - AARP 1-888-687-2277 or www.aarp.org/auto
 - AAA 1-800-222-4357 or www.aaa.com





□ **Find transportation options in your community.**

Finding transportation options before you need them—and learning how to use them—will help you keep the freedom to go where you want at any age. Here are some places to look for transportation options in your area. Not all of these may be available where you live:

- Native Elder Service Locator
1-800-896-7628
or www.nrcnaa.org/service-locator
- Rides in Sight 1-855-607-4337
or www.ridesinsight.org
- Eldercare Locator 1-800-677-1116
or www.eldercare.acl.gov
- A place of worship, local senior center, Tribal office, or similar organization
- Health insurance provider like some Medicare and Medicaid plans
- Local government webpages for public transportation
- Rideshare services such as Uber and Lyft or taxis



□ **Make a plan for your future transportation options.**

Make a list of all the places you go now and how you get there. Then think about how you would get to these same places if you couldn't use your current way. Consider some of the options you found above. For example, maybe you currently drive yourself to get lunch with friends, but in the future you could get a ride from a friend or take a taxi if you couldn't drive yourself.

MyMobility Tip



Think about how a computer or phone can be used to:

- Have prescriptions or groceries delivered
- Check in with your doctor or other healthcare provider
- Connect with friends and family

What can I do next?

Get comfortable with the transportation options you find by trying them out now, perhaps with a friend or a family member.



Additional Resources

- Healthy Tribes – find information about promoting health in Tribal Communities: www.cdc.gov/healthytribes
- Healthy Aging – find information about exercise, nutrition, staying connected, and more: www.hhs.gov/aging/healthy-aging
- Still Going Strong – learn how to age without injury: www.cdc.gov/stillgoingstrong
- National Resource Center on Native American Aging – services and programs that support healthy aging: www.nrcnaa.org
- Native Elder Service Locator – services that may be offered in your community: 1-800-896-7628 or www.nrcnaa.org/service-locator
- Eldercare Locator – local Area Agency on Aging resources on housing, transportation, and more: 1-800-677-1116 or www.eldercare.acl.gov
- Lifeline Program – support for phone and internet services for people with low incomes: 1-800-234-9473 or www.lifelinesupport.org
- National Council on Aging – resources about aging well: www.ncoa.org



MyNotes

Use this space to make notes on next steps, things to discuss with your family or friends, or questions you may have for your healthcare provider.

For more information about the MyMobility Plan visit:

www.cdc.gov/transportationsafety/older_adult_drivers/mymobility



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Injury Prevention and Control