Checklist:
7 Things to Ask Your Parent's Doctor After a Fall

According to the World Health Organization, nearly half of people over age 85 – and a third of those age 65 and older – have experienced a fall. Ask your parent's doctor these questions to help with recovery and prevent future falls.

☐ **1. Why did my parent fall?**

Determine if the fall was caused by external factors (like a loose area rug) or internal factors (which could be anything from diet to a variety of medical conditions).

☐ **2. Did prescription medications contribute to the fall?**

Some medications heighten fall risk. Bring a complete list of medications and dosages your parent takes to their doctor's appointment. The doctor will determine if any adjustments are warranted.

☐ **3. Are there any issues with balance or gait?**

Ask the doctor to watch the way your parent walks. Pain or discomfort might be causing your parent to move differently. You might consider seeing a physical therapist for a more thorough assessment.

☐ **4. Have heart or neurological problems played a role?**

If falls or near falls become more frequent, and other causes have been ruled out, ask your parent's physician about checking for heart and neurological issues.

☐ **5. Should we have any lab work or other testing done?**

Blood tests can identify underlying causes that contribute to falls. Ask the doctor to order appropriate labs and share the results – and to also check for vision and inner ear problems.

☐ **6. How do we make sure my parent is safe?**

Ask the doctor if your parent is safe living independently. If so, make sure to "fall-proof" their home to guard against tripping or slipping hazards. If the time for extra help has come, ask about resources for in-home care or an assisted living community.

☐ **7. How can we prevent future falls?**

Request the doctor's guidance on physical wellness, healthy nutrition and medication management. Continue to monitor internal and external conditions that might undermine your parent's safety – and lead to another fall.

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