

Yet, while most adults are aware of the potential dangers of falling, few realize that most falls are preventable. In fact, you can significantly reduce your risk of falling by taking some basic precautionary steps, such as exercising regularly, keeping regular doctor and eye appointments and removing common hazards from your home. The HealthONE Injury Prevention Program offers a wide range of resources and information to help you gain the knowledge, awareness and confidence you need to prevent falls and stay injury-free. Starting with this guide, we can help you and your family learn the steps necessary to enjoy a fall-free future.

Want more information on how you can prevent falls?

Join other older adults in learning how you can take control of your life to prevent falls!

Take control of your life to remain independent in your own home without a fear of falling by enrolling in a Stepping On workshop. Learn from local experts different ways to prevent falls, including strength and balance exercises, the impact of medication and vision on your risk of falls, how to do a home assessment, safe footwear, and improving your sleep. You'll get the support you need to take charge of your life.



To register or receive more information, call 303-788-6587



The Medical Center of Aurora
Centennial Medical Plaza
North Suburban Medical Center
North Suburban Northeast ER
Presbyterian/St. Luke's Medical Center & Rocky Mountain Hospital for Children
Rose Medical Center
Sky Ridge Medical Center
Swedish Medical Center
Swedish Southwest ER

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Fall Prevention
Take Steps today for a Fall-Free Future



As we get older, falls become a greater source of concern...

...and with good reason. Fall-related injuries are the most common cause for emergency room visits and hospital admissions for people over 65 in the U.S. Over the past decade, the rate of fall-related deaths among older adults has increased significantly.

In the U.S. alone, one-third of adults 65 and older experience a fall every year, and often with devastating results.



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Important Facts About Falling

Falls happen every day to thousands of individuals. From traumatic brain injuries to serious fractures of the hips, legs and feet, fall-related injuries account for five times more adult hospitalizations than any other type of injuries. The damage isn't limited to physical issues only.

After a fall, many older adults become so fearful of falling again that they severely limit their daily activities, which can lead to reduced physical fitness and mobility, factors that ultimately increase one's vulnerability to future falls.

Fall Risk Factors

- Advanced age.
- Dizziness caused by medications or medical conditions.
- Muscle weakness.
- Confusion.
- Slippery or loose-fitting footwear
- Poor lighting in your home.
- Vision problems.
- Cluttered hallways or stairways
- Loose rugs or carpeting.
- Slippery bathroom surfaces.
- Steep or narrow stairs.
- Balance disorders or an abnormal gait.
- Osteoporosis that makes bones more brittle.
- Poor nutrition and dehydration.
- Too much alcohol.

To Prevent Falls—Be Aware and Prepared

There are 4 steps for you to take to prevent falls:

1. BEGIN A REGULAR EXERCISE PROGRAM

Exercise regularly to maintain balance, muscle strength and flexibility.

2. REVIEW YOUR MEDICATIONS WITH YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

Talk to your doctor about any potential side effects of your current medications that may increase your risk for falling. For example, blood pressure medications, heart medications, diuretics/water pills, muscle relaxants and tranquilizers can affect your balance and/or cause drowsiness.

3. STAY FOCUSED

Have your vision checked at least once a year and be sure to keep glasses clean at all times.

4. MAKE YOUR HOME A SAFE PLACE

- Make sure you have adequate light throughout your home.
- Secure loose rugs, use non-slip mats in your bathtub or shower and use non-skid flooring throughout your house.
- Be sure to repair loose, wooden floorboards and carpeting right away and clean up spilled liquids, grease or food immediately.
- Remove clutter.
- Make your home even safer by installing helpful devices in key areas, such as grab bars in your bathroom and handrails and non-slip treads on stairs.
- Use a sturdy stepstool with a handrail and wide steps to reach higher shelves and cabinets.



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What to Do If You Fall

Even with the most careful precautions, falls can still happen. Here are some suggestions to keep in mind to reduce injuries and remain safe:



During a Fall:

- Use your hands or grab things around you to break a fall.
- If you have a history of falling, you may also want to wear extra clothes to pad hips or use special hip pads.

After a Fall:

- Stay quiet for a few moments before moving.
- Call 911 if you need immediate help.
- Always tell someone about your fall (doctor, family, friend or caregiver).
- Take action to prevent another fall (see suggestions above).