


The Gravity of Falls


Simple Steps to
Help Prevent Falls



Today we will discuss:

- ▶ Facts, realities & costs associated with falls
 - ▶ Types of risk factors
 - ▶ Simple steps to help prevent and/or reduce your fall risk
 - ▶ If fall occurs...
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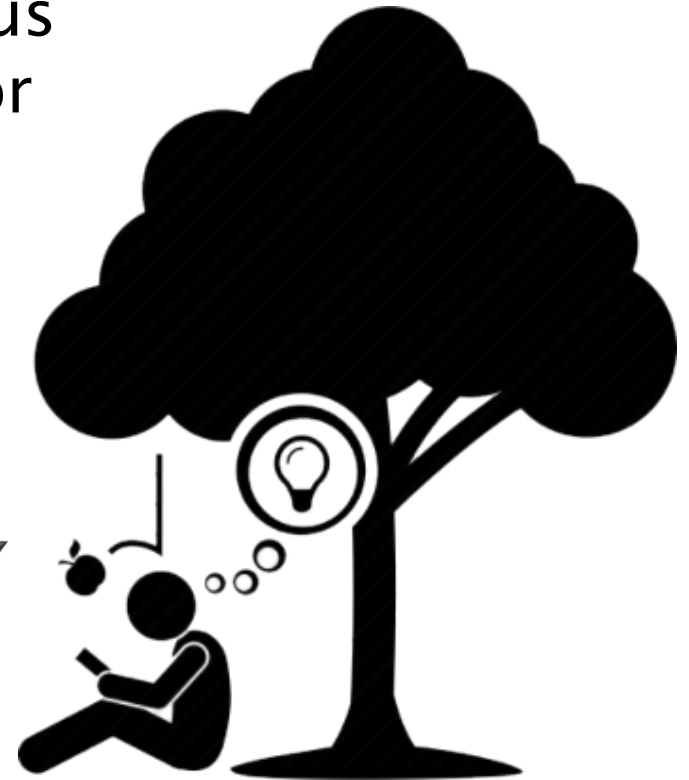
What is a fall?



Did you know...

- More than 1 out of 4 older people fall each year.
- Less than 1 / 2 of those that fall tell their doctor.
- 1 out of 5 falls causes a serious injury such as broken bones or a head injury.

There's No Breaking
the Law... of *Gravity*



Falls Are Serious and Costly

Each year at least 300,000 older people are hospitalized for hip fractures.


More than 95% of hip fractures are caused by falling, usually by falling sideways.

Falls are the most common cause of traumatic brain injuries (TBI).

According to the CDC, falling once doubles your chances of falling...
...again.

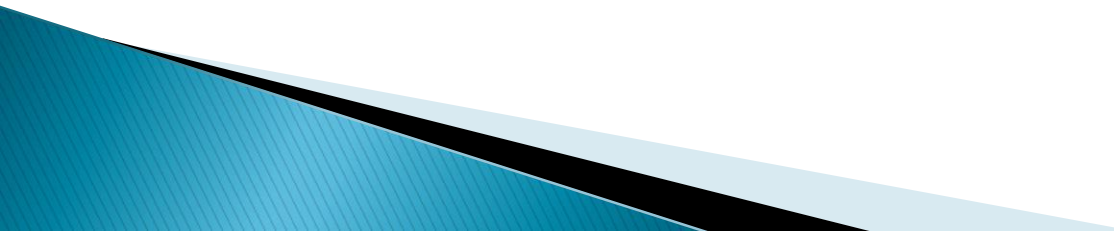


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Fall Risk Factors

Most falls result from a number of risk factors:

- ▶ **Physical risk factors:** Changes in your body that increase your risk for a fall
 - ▶ **Behavioral risk factors:** Things we do or don't do that increase our fall risk
 - ▶ **Environmental risk factors:** Hazards in our home or community
- 

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Risk Factors

You CAN change

- ▶ Physical inactivity
- ▶ Vision
- ▶ Medication Use
- ▶ Weakness
- ▶ Fear of falling
- ▶ Daily Behavior
- ▶ Improper use of devices
- ▶ Home Environment
- ▶ Social Isolation

You CAN'T change

- ▶ Age
- ▶ Medical Conditions

Physical Risk Factors

You CAN change

- ▶ **Physical inactivity**
- ▶ **Vision**
- ▶ **Medication Use**
- ▶ **Weakness**
- ▶ **Fear of falling**
- ▶ Daily Behavior
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You CAN'T change

- ▶ **Age**
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Combating Physical Inactivity

Rossmoor Fitness Center



Talk to your doctor before starting an exercise program

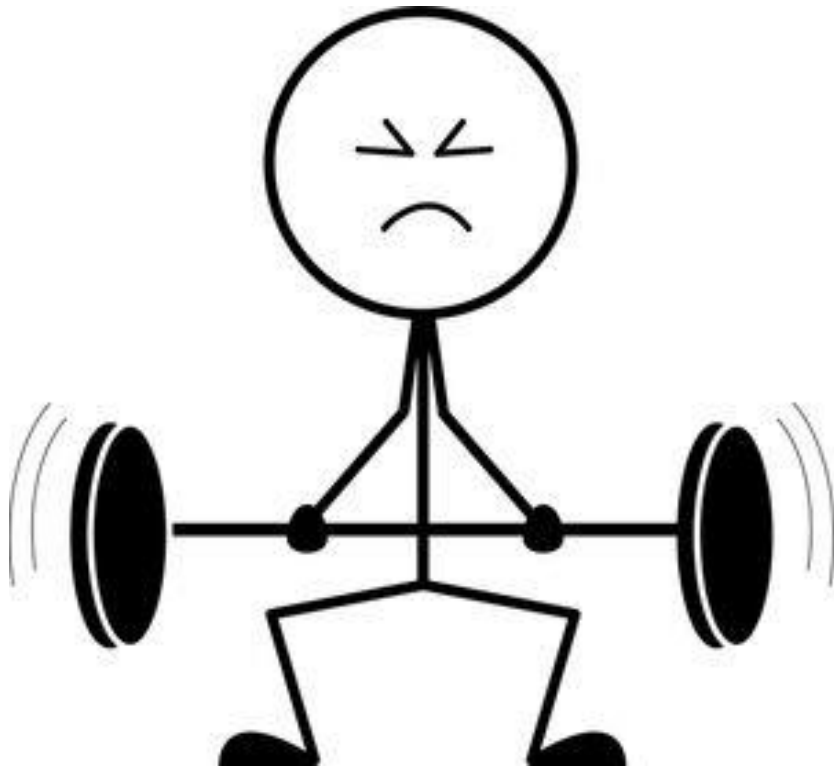
Begin with PT or fall prevention classes

Be sure classes are for *your* age group or ability level

Stick with it!

www.ticefitnesscenter.com

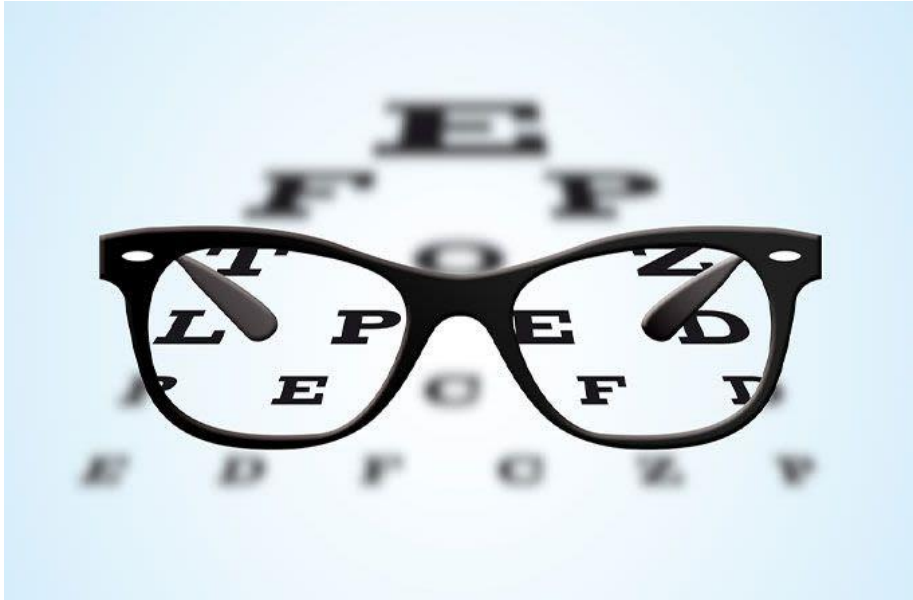
Muscle Strength Fades After Just Two Weeks of Inactivity



Lack of physical activity can contribute to loss of muscle and increased weakness.

This puts you at a greater risk of a fall because your muscles can't support or compensate for sudden movement changes.

Check your Vision



- Having annual eye exams after age 50 can help identify vision problems.
- Wearing multifocal lenses may blur or distort your vision looking down.
- Removing cataract(s) may reduce fall risk.

Medication Usage

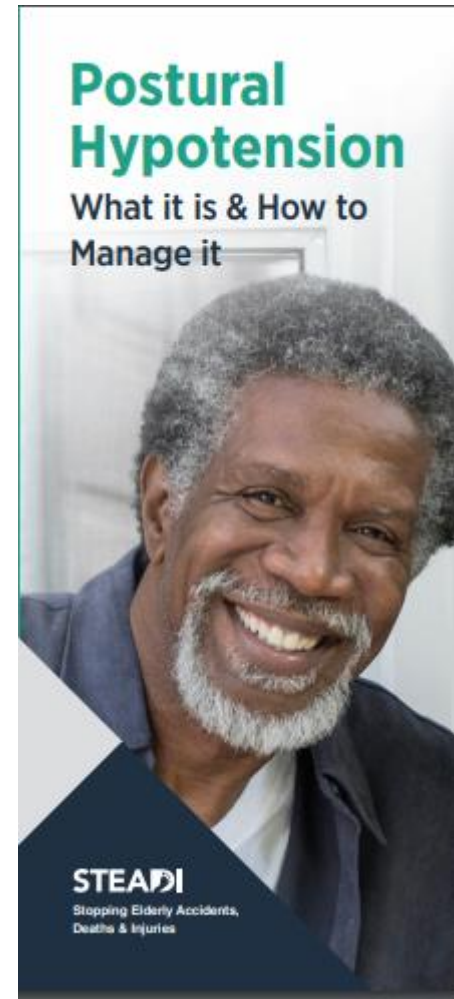
- Use one pharmacy
- Side effects may make you dizzy or less alert
- Medication changes can increase fall risk
- Review your medications each year
- Read your labels and understand what you are taking.



Let your doctor know if you have side effects!

Blood Pressure Changes

- ▶ Check your blood pressure regularly.
- ▶ If you get dizzy when you stand up, see your doctor and have your “sit to stand” blood pressure checked.
- ▶ Some blood pressure medications increase fall risk; speak with your doctor.



<https://www.cdc.gov/steady/pdf/STEADI-Brochure-Postural-Hypotension-508.pdf>

Fear of Falling

is a lasting concern about falling that may cause a person to stop doing activities s/he remains able to do



Do you **limit** activities?

Why does a fear of falling matter?



May stop you from
doing activities

Legs weaken with
inactivity

Inactivity leads to falls

May make the person
feel alone

May cause depression

Behavioral Risk Factors

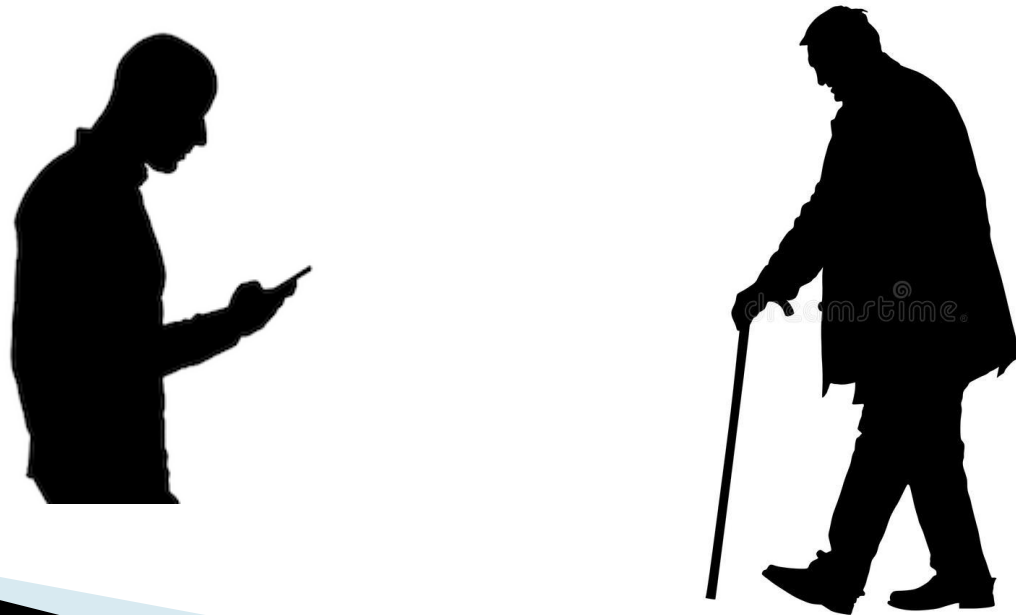
You CAN change

- ▶ Physical inactivity
- ▶ Vision
- ▶ Medication Use
- ▶ Weakness
- ▶ Fear of falling
- ▶ **Daily Behavior**
- ▶ **Improper use of devices**
- ▶ Home Environment
- ▶ Social Isolation

You CAN'T change

- ▶ Age
- ▶ Medical Conditions

Falls are largely preventable!









Stairs and Steps: Fall Hazards a Step Away





A fall will reduce your independence much more drastically than asking for and getting help for things you struggle with.



Environmental Risk Factors

You CAN change

- ▶ Physical inactivity
- ▶ Vision
- ▶ Medication Use
- ▶ Weakness
- ▶ Fear of falling
- ▶ Daily Behavior
- ▶ Improper use of devices
- ▶ **Home Environment**
- ▶ **Social Isolation**

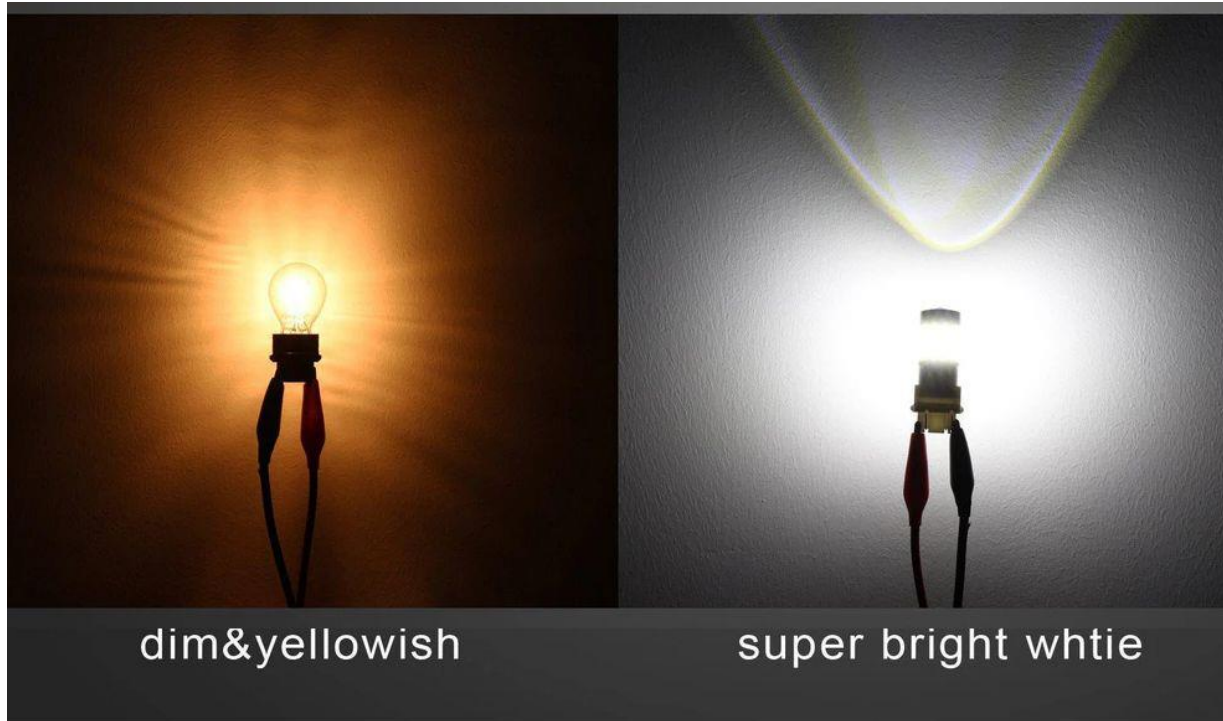
You CAN'T change

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Floors Are the Foundations of Fall Prevention

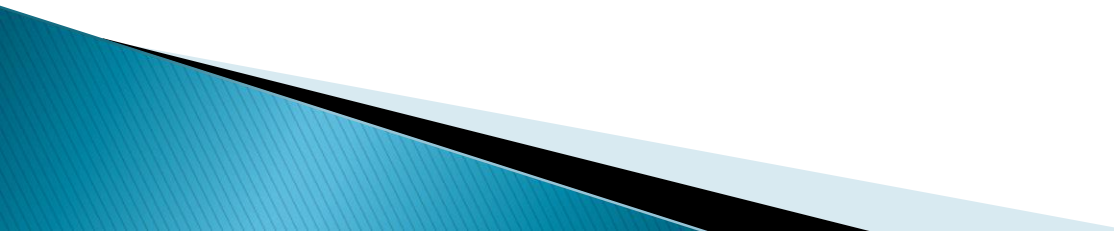


Have adequate lighting!



- Are your bulbs too dim?
- Have your bulbs gone out?
- Do you have enough lighting?
- Is your lighting easy to turn on?

Modifying your environment

- ▶ **Is it harder to stand from a sitting position?** Install grab bars or safety poles in bathrooms, by your bed or favorite chair.
 - ▶ **Check your surroundings** – Install non-slip bathmats in the shower tub, and where you step out from the shower/bath so that you do not slip.
 - ▶ **Protect your feet** – Wear well fitting footwear both inside the house. It can provide much needed stability. It can protect from falling if you step on a stone or stub a toe.
 - ▶ **Patience** – Take your time when moving about the house or when going from sitting to standing. If the phone or doorbell ring, they can wait for you or leave a message.
- 

Home Safety Evaluation

- ▶ Identify and eliminate fall hazards in your home and community
- ▶ *Check for Safety* Brochure in CDC's STEADI Toolkit
- ▶ An occupational therapist can help identify safety issues and solutions

<https://www.cdc.gov/steady/pdf/STEADI-Brochure-CheckForSafety-508.pdf>



Use proper tools, Use them properly




Grab bars, Cane, Walker...

Is it the proper fit?

Make sure brakes work and are used!

Replace broken pieces promptly!

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If a Fall Occurs ...

- ▶ Check for injury.
- ▶ Call for help, if needed.
- ▶ Seek medical attention right away if you might have hit your head.
- ▶ Call your doctor.
- ▶ Learn how to get up safely.
- ▶ Check for safety hazards.



Helpful tools – iPhone



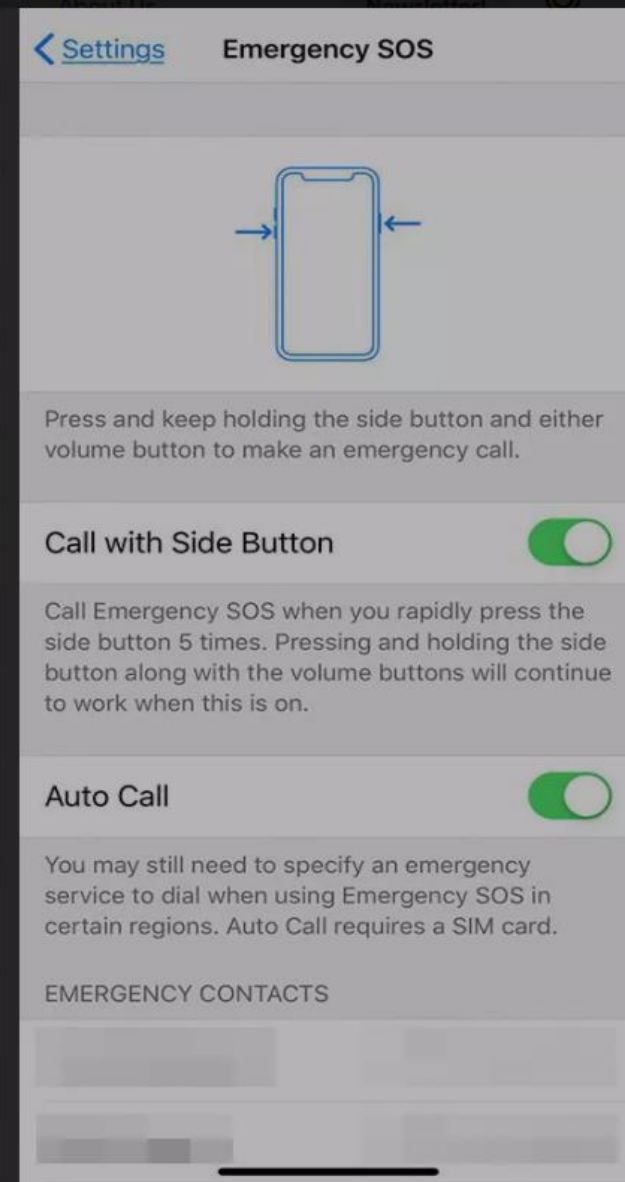
When you make a call with SOS, your iPhone will call the local emergency number automatically.

You can also add emergency contacts (See Star of Life/Medical ID).

After an emergency call has finished, your iPhone can alert your emergency contacts with a text message, unless you choose to cancel this option.

Your iPhone sends them your current location, and, for a period of time when you have entered SOS mode, it sends updates to your emergency contacts when your location changes.

Helpful tools – iPhone – SOS



Helpful tools – Apple Watch



If Apple Watch Series 4 or later detects a hard fall while you're wearing your watch, it taps you on the wrist, sounds an alarm, and displays an alert.

You can choose to contact emergency services or dismiss the alert

If your Apple Watch detects that you're moving, it waits for you to respond to the alert and won't automatically call emergency services.

If your watch detects that you have been immobile for about a minute, it will make the call automatically.

Helpful tools – Android

Android offers a preassigned emergency contact from the lock screen.



While the setup may differ somewhat depending on what phone you have and which version of Android it runs, the basics should be the same.

Go to your phone's lock screen.

Look for the word “Emergency” at the bottom of the lock screen. Tap on that.

Tap “Emergency information”, then pencil symbol or, “Add”.

Enter your PIN or lock pattern.

This will bring you to your Emergency information screen where you can add personal information (such as blood type or any existing medical conditions) and any contacts you want to be notified.



What
Is
Your
Goal?

Four Things You Can Do to Prevent Falls:

① **Speak up.**

Talk openly with your healthcare provider about fall risks and prevention. Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review your medicines.

② **Keep moving.**

Begin an exercise program to improve your leg strength and balance.

③ **Get an annual eye exam.**

Replace eyeglasses as needed.

④ **Make your home safer.**

Remove clutter and tripping hazards.

Learn More

Contact your local community or senior center for information on exercise, fall prevention programs, and options for improving home safety, or visit:

- go.usa.gov/xN9XA
- www.stopfalls.org



1 in 4 people 65 and older falls each year.

Stay Independent

Learn more about fall prevention.



For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/steady

This brochure was produced in collaboration with the following organizations: VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System, Geriatric Research Education & Clinical Center (GRECC), and the Fall Prevention Center of Excellence



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

STEADY

Check Your Risk for Falling

Circle "Yes" or "No" for each statement below			Why it matters
Yes (2)	No (0)	I have fallen in the past year.	People who have fallen once are likely to fall again.
Yes (2)	No (0)	I use or have been advised to use a cane or walker to get around safely.	People who have been advised to use a cane or walker may already be more likely to fall.
Yes (1)	No (0)	Sometimes I feel unsteady when I am walking.	Unsteadiness or needing support while walking are signs of poor balance.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I steady myself by holding onto furniture when walking at home.	This is also a sign of poor balance.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I am worried about falling.	People who are worried about falling are more likely to fall.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I need to push with my hands to stand up from a chair.	This is a sign of weak leg muscles, a major reason for falling.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I have some trouble stepping up onto a curb.	This is also a sign of weak leg muscles.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I often have to rush to the toilet.	Rushing to the bathroom, especially at night, increases your chance of falling.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I have lost some feeling in my feet.	Numbness in your feet can cause stumbles and lead to falls.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I take medicine that sometimes makes me feel light-headed or more tired than usual.	Side effects from medicines can sometimes increase your chance of falling.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I take medicine to help me sleep or improve my mood.	These medicines can sometimes increase your chance of falling.
Yes (1)	No (0)	I often feel sad or depressed.	Symptoms of depression, such as not feeling well or feeling slowed down, are linked to falls.
Total _____			Add up the number of points for each "yes" answer. If you scored 4 points or more, you may be at risk for falling.

Where can I find that brochure?

<https://www.cdc.gov/steady/pdf/STEADI-Brochure-StayIndependent-508.pdf>



Evidence-Based Fall Prevention Programs

▶ National Council on Aging

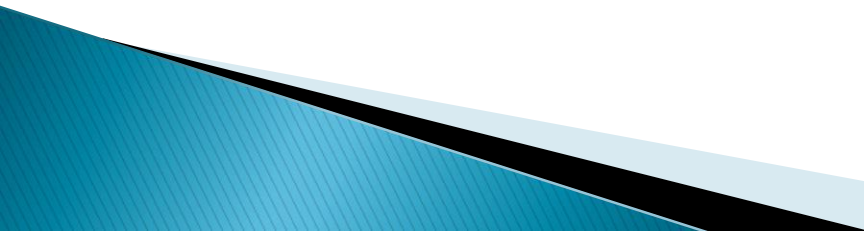
- Provides information on evidence-based falls prevention programs and more.

<https://www.ncoa.org/healthy-aging/falls-prevention/falls-prevention-programs-for-older-adults-2/>

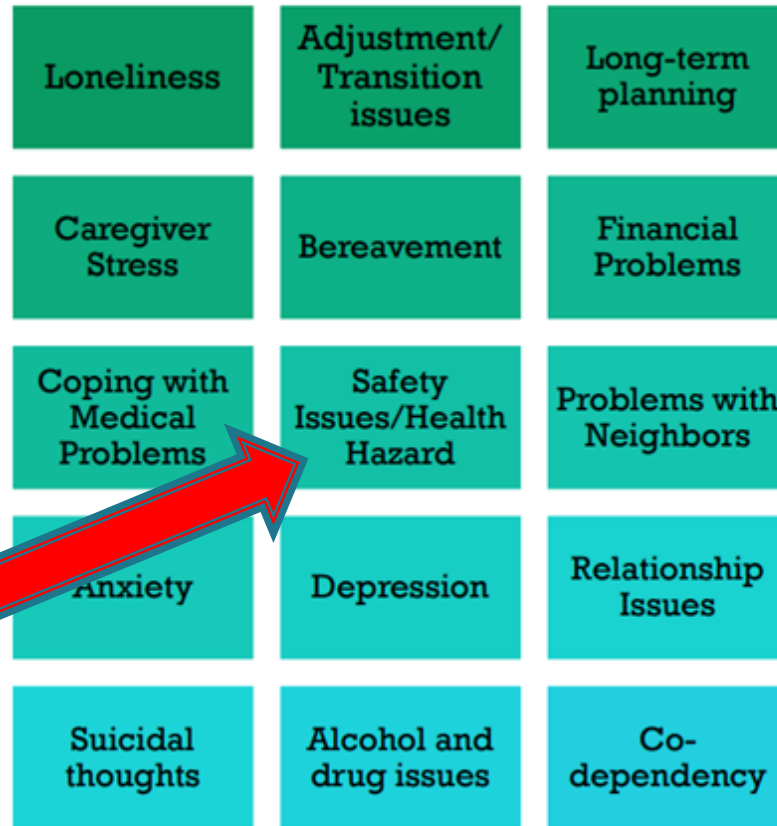
▶ Falls Free® Initiative

- Provides resources and evidence-based practice to reduce fall-related injuries and death among older adults

<https://www.ncoa.org/healthy-aging/falls-prevention/falls-free-initiative/>



Rossmoor Counseling Services




Loneliness	Adjustment/ Transition issues	Long-term planning
Caregiver Stress	Bereavement	Financial Problems
Coping with Medical Problems	Safety Issues/Health Hazard	Problems with Neighbors
Anxiety	Depression	Relationship Issues
Suicidal thoughts	Alcohol and drug issues	Co- dependency

Some of the issues
Counseling Services
assists with

<https://rossmoor.com/residents/resident-services/counseling-services/>

Start Now–Start Small

Choose one risk factor to address at a time

- **Pharmacist & Doctor:**
Review medications for side effects that may increase your risk of falling
 - **Occupational Therapist:**
Request a home assessment and recommendations to make your home safer
 - **Physical Therapist and/or Exercise Program:**
Can help with physical activity, balance, strength, and moving safely
- 

REMEMBER

Move More!
Have Patience!
Stay Safe & Healthy



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