

## Falls in Older Adults

### Fast Facts on Falls

- **Falls are the leading cause of fatal and nonfatal injuries in older adults.**
- Over 14 million, or one in four older adults report falling every year.
- There are about one million fall-related hospitalizations among older adults annually.
- One out of ten falls results in an injury that causes the older adult to restrict their normal daily activities or seek medical attention.

### High Risk Conditions

Fall prevention isn't just about being careful. Underlying health conditions can affect an individual's balance, strength, or cognition, increasing their chance of experiencing a fall.

- **Arthritis** – joint pain and stiffness, mobility limitations, fatigue
- **Dementia** – cognitive impairment, reduced spatial awareness, wandering
- **Diabetes** – low blood sugar, nerve damage (neuropathy), vision impairment (retinopathy)
- **Multiple Sclerosis** – poor balance, muscle weakness, sudden exhaustion
- **Overactive Bladder** – excessive urination at night (nocturia), urinary urgency, incontinence

### Fall Prevention Strategies

#### ***Recognize and address modifiable fall risk factors.***

Lower Body Weakness | Vitamin D Deficiency | Vision Impairment | High Risk Medications | Alcohol Consumption | Poor Balance or Unsteadiness | Foot Pain or Poor Footwear

#### ***Recognize and remove environmental risk factors for falling.***

Broken or Uneven Steps | Trip Hazards (e.g., rugs or electrical wires) | Missing Handrails | Poor Lighting

#### ***Encourage residents and caregivers to discuss medications contributing to risk of falls with their provider and/or pharmacist.***

Opioids | Antidepressants | Anxiolytics | Sedative Hypnotics | Antihypertensives | Muscle Relaxants | Anticonvulsants | Antipsychotics | Hypoglycemics

#### ***Conduct resident fall risk assessments to assess risk factors and formulate an action plan.***

The CDC's **Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths & Injuries (STEADI) Initiative** is comprised of three core elements: Screen, Assess, and Intervene.

# DID YOU KNOW?



Following guidance from the British Geriatric Society's Clinical Practice Guideline on Fall Prevention, the STEADI program focuses on preventing falls in community-dwelling adults ages 65 years and older. However, with a suite of resources such as the [Algorithm for Fall Risk Screening, Assessment, and Intervention](#) and [SAFE Medication Review Framework](#), skilled nursing facilities, senior living communities, and home health agencies may easily adopt these tools to aid in their own fall prevention efforts.

## References

1. [Facts About Falls](#). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. January 27, 2026.
2. [About STEADI](#). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. August 4, 2025.