

➤ Helping Older Adults Decrease Fall Risk at Home

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OKLAHOMA
State Department
of Health



Overview

- Scope of the Problem
- Risk factors for falling
- Evidence-based programming
- Preventing falls at home
- Professional resources

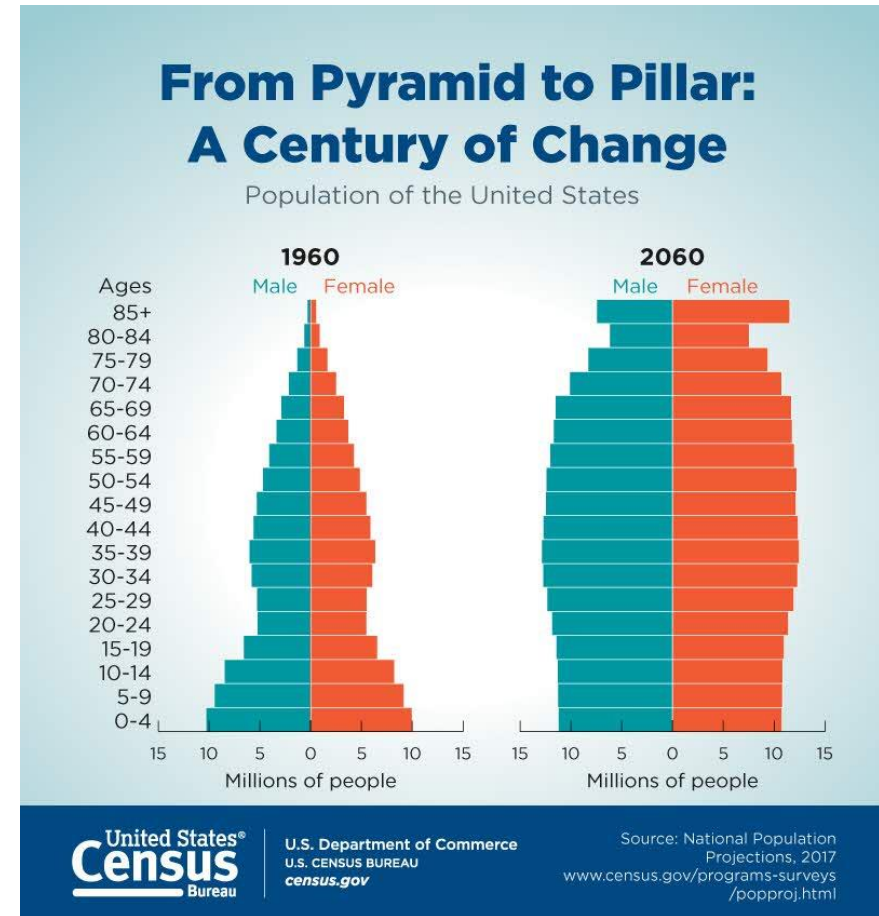


Scope of the Problem



➤ Fastest Growing Population

- 65 and older population grows rapidly as Baby Boomers age
- By 2030, more than 37 million people, or 60% are expected to be living with more than one chronic condition
- Population aging presents new patterns of work and retirement and new social and economic challenges



➤ Common Injuries as We Age

Top 10 Causes of Death Among Older Adults									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Heart Disease	Cancer (malignant neoplasms)	COVID-19	Stroke	Alzheimer's Disease	Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	Diabetes	Unintentional Injury	Kidney Disease	Influenza & Pneumonia

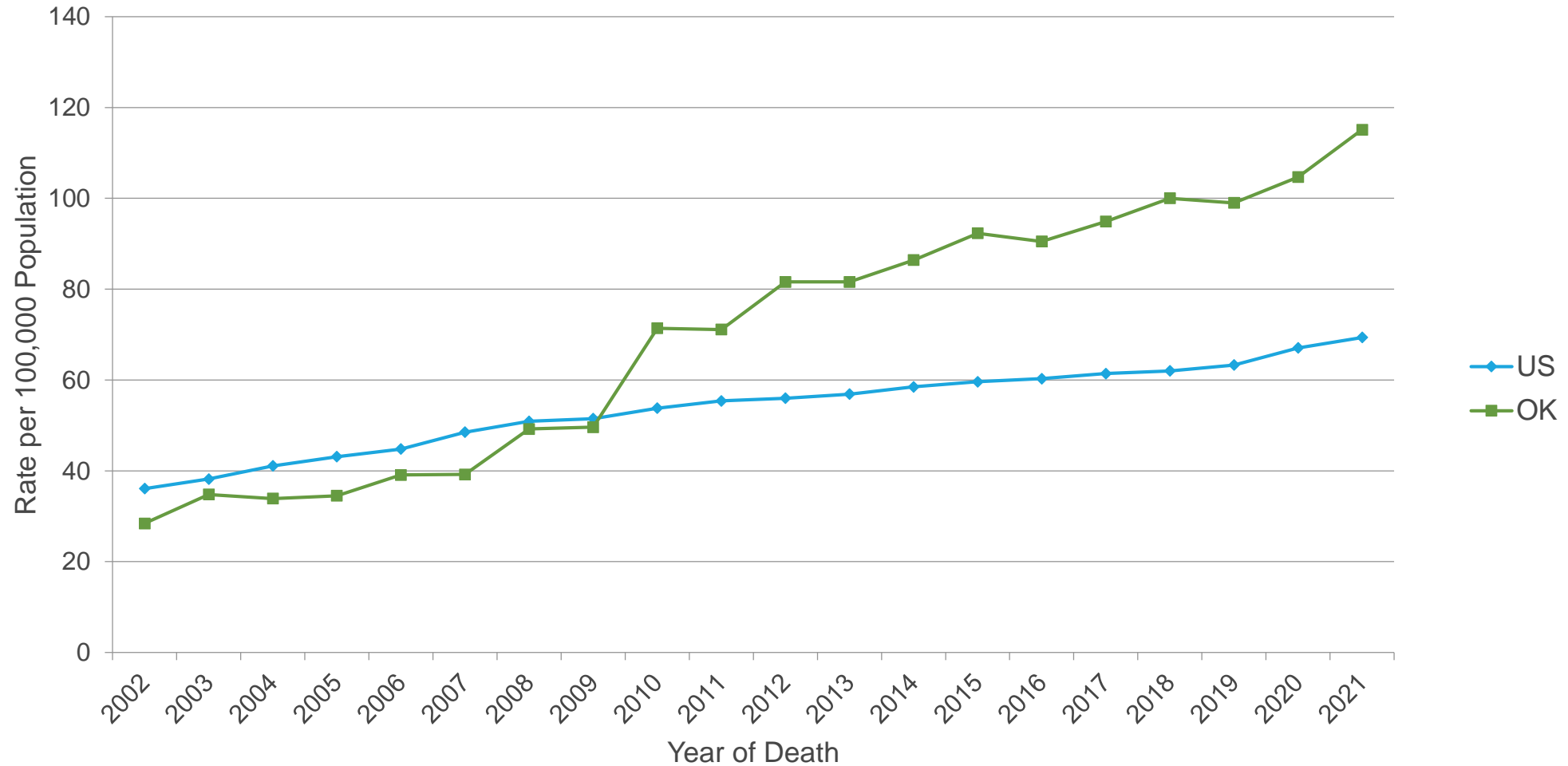
Unintentional Injury	
1	2
Falls 58.1%	Motor Vehicle Traffic 11.9%

Falls and motor vehicle crashes are common causes of traumatic brain injury among older adults.

Data source: National Vital Statistics System
2020 WISQARS data

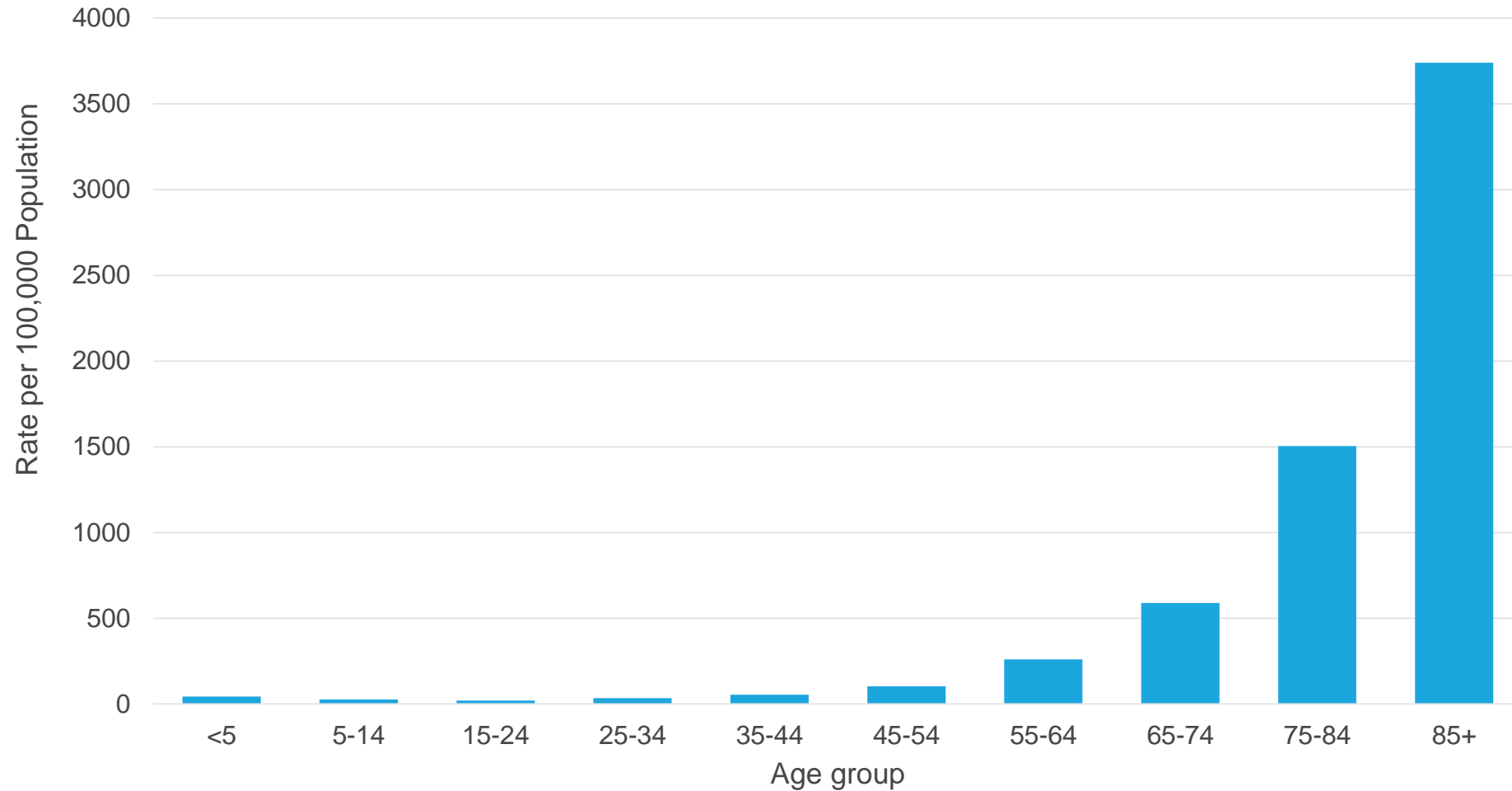


► Unintentional Fall-related Mortality Rates Among Persons 65 Years and Older, United States and Oklahoma, 2002-2021



Source: CDC WISQARS (Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System)

► Unintentional Nonfatal Inpatient Fall-Related Hospitalization Rates by Age Group, Oklahoma, 2019-2021



► Traumatic Brain Injury Deaths Among Adults 65 Years and Older, Oklahoma, 2018-2022

Year	Number of Deaths	Rate per 100,000
2018	394	63.7
2019	389	61.1
2020	377	57.7
2021	393	60.8
2022	507	76.7

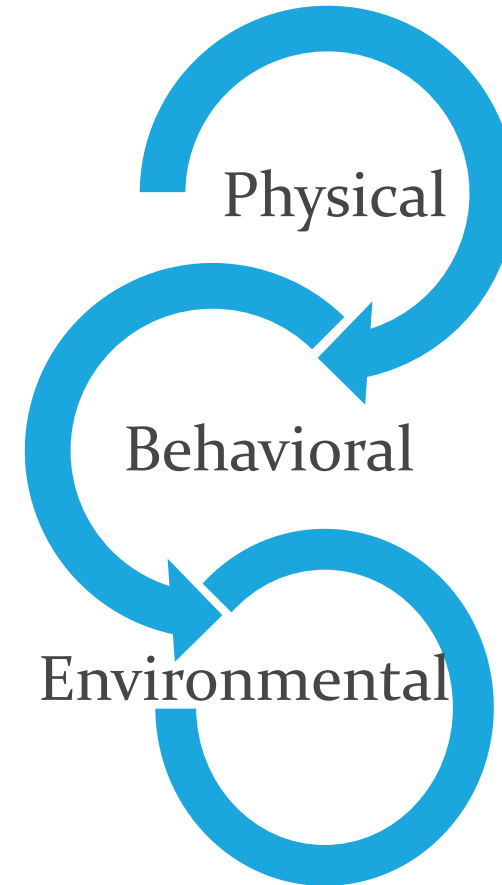


Risk Factors for Falling



➤ Risk Factors for Falling

- Falls result from a number of risk factors:
 - Physical
 - Behavioral
 - Environmental



➤ Risk of a Fall May Increase When...

- Change in medication
- Infection or illness
- Pain
- Lack of sleep
- Anxious
- Inactivity
- Moving to a new home
- Using a new cane or walker



➤ Risk Factors for Falling

▪ **Medication and Fall Risk:**

- Make sure to review prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications, and herbal supplements.
 - Side effects may include dizziness, unsteadiness, and sleepiness
 - Changes in medication can increase fall risk
 - Use only one pharmacy
 - Read labels on your medication
 - Talk to your doctor about your medications

▪ **Vision and Fall Risk:**

- Vision impairment and blindness affect one in 11 Americans aged 65 years and older.
 - Have an annual eye exam
 - Wearing multifocal lenses may distort vision
 - If an individual has cataracts, have them talk to their doctor



➤ Risk Factors for Falling

▪ Blood Pressure and Fall Risk:

- Measure blood pressure
- Sit to stand blood pressure
- Some blood pressure medications can increase fall risk

▪ Chronic Conditions and Fall Risk:

- About 80% of older adults have at least one chronic disease and 68% have two chronic conditions
 - Diabetes
 - Arthritis
 - Stroke
 - Parkinson's
 - Chronic Pain
 - Depression



Preventing Falls at Home



➤ Preventing Falls at Home

▪ Bathrooms:

- Make sure there are grab bars near toilets and on both the outside and inside of your shower and tub
- Place nonskid mats on surfaces that may get wet
- Remember to use a nightlight or keep a light on in the bathroom at night



▪ Bedrooms:

- Put night lights and light switches next to beds
- Keep a flashlight next to a bed incase the power goes out
- Place a cellphone or landline next to the bed



➤ Preventing Falls at Home

▪ Kitchen:

- Keep regularly used pans, pots, and utensils in an easy to reach place or cabinet
- Clean up spills immediately
- Prepare food while seated if you start feeling dizzy



▪ Stairways, hallways, and floors:

- Make sure there are handrails on both sides of any stairs
- Ensure there is good lighting and accessible light switches at the top and bottom of stairs
- Make sure walkways are tidy
- Don't use throw rugs
- Put no-slip strips on carpets so they are firmly on the floor
- Don't walk on slippery surfaces



➤ Preventing Falls at Home

▪ **Outdoor spaces:**

- If you have steps leading up to a house, make sure there is no broken or uneven steps
- Add a non-slip materials to outdoor stairways
- Keep the deck, lawn and porch areas free of fallen branches and debris
- Install a grab bar near the front and back door to help with balance when unlocking the doors
- Turn on a light outside if it will be dark when returning home

▪ **Other living areas:**

- Keep electrical cords away from walking paths
- Arrange furniture so they are not in walkways
- Make sure furniture is the right height to get out of easily
- Don't stand on a table or chair to reach something
- Keep a list of emergency numbers, in large print, that is easy to see or reach




Evidence-based Falls Prevention Programs



➤ Evidence-Based Programs: A Matter of Balance

- **A Matter of Balance (MOB)**
 - A Matter of Balance is designed to reduce the fear of falling and improve activity levels among community-dwelling older adults.
 - Participants learn about the importance of exercise in preventing falls and practice exercises to improve strength, coordination and balance.



MANAGING CONCERNS ABOUT FALLS

Want to make a difference in an **older adult's life** in your community?
Become a trained **Matter of Balance Coach** today!

MOB is an evidence-based structured group intervention program, designed to reduce the fear of falling and increase activity levels among community-dwelling older adults. This program allows participants to gain confidence by learning to view falls as controllable, set goals for increasing activity, make environmental changes to reduce fall risk at home, and learn exercises to improve gait, balance, and strength.

Coach Qualifications:

- Good interpersonal skills and communication
- Enthusiasm
- Willingness to lead a small group
- Dependability
- Interest in working with older adults
- Ability to perform a range of motion and low-level endurance exercises

How do you become a MOB Coach?

- Attend eight hours of in person MOB training taught by a Master Trainer
- Agree to coach two MOB classes within one year of certification
- Attend 2.5 hours of Coach Training annually

OKLAHOMA State Department of Health

For more information on MOB, contact Madelyn Maxwell, Healthy Aging and Falls Prevention Coordinator, at MadelynM@health.ok.gov or 405-426-8440.

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➤ Evidence-Based Programs: A Matter of Balance

- **Benefits of Matter of Balance:**
 - View falls and fear of falling as controllable
 - Set realistic goals for increasing activity
 - Change their environment to reduce fall risk factors
 - Promote exercise to increase strength and balance



➤ Evidence-Based Programs-Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance

▪ **Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance:**

- Tai Chi is a centuries-old Chinese practice designed to exercise the mind and body through a series of gentle, flowing postures
- 8 forms that focus on weight shifting, postural alignments, and coordinated movements
- Shown to reduce falls by up to 55%
- Focuses on community-dwelling older adults

▪ **Benefits of Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance**

- Improved balance
- Improved lower extremity strength
- Improved physical performance
- Preventing injurious falls and falls in general



➤ Walk with Ease

- A community-based physical activity and self-management education program
 - A self-guided course in the community
 - Gain an understanding of the basics of arthritis, and the relationship between arthritis and pain
 - Gather tips, strategies and resources that will help participants maintain long-term exercise routine
- Studies find that the Walk with Ease is proven to:
 - Reduce the pain and discomfort of arthritis
 - Increase balance, strength, and walking pace
 - Build confidence in your ability to be physically active
 - Improve overall health



➤ Motor Vehicle Safety

- CarFit is an educational program developed by AAA, AARP, and the American Occupational Therapy Association that offers older adults the opportunity to check how their personal vehicles “fit” them.
- Provides information and materials on community-specific resources that can increase their mobility in their community.

CARFIT Helping Mature Drivers Find Their Safest Fit

AOTA The American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc. AAA AARP Driver Safety

1 in 4 adults now 65 will live to 90+

MyMobility Plan

MyNeighborhood A plan to stay mobile in my community

What can you do to stay independent?

Many people make financial plans for retirement, but not everyone plans for other changes that may come with age. This includes changes in your mobility—your ability to get around.

It's not easy to talk about, but as we get older, physical changes can make it harder to get around and do things we want or need to do—like driving, shopping, or doing household chores.

You might not have mobility problems now, but you could in the future. You may even know others who already do—perhaps a parent, relative, friend, or neighbor. While it may not be possible to prevent all of these changes, there are actions you and your loved ones can take today, and as you age, to help keep you safe and independent tomorrow.

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

Finish your plan by filling out the table below.

Think of all the places you go and how you get there.

Then, consider how you would get to these same places if you couldn't use your current way.

Find transportation options in your ZIP code:

- Rides in Sight
1-855-607-4337
www.ridesinsight.org

Ride share services can help keep you connected to family and friends. Staying social helps maintain quality of life as you age.

Where do I go now? (Such as doctor, grocery store, or physical activity class)	How do I get there now? (Such as drive, get a ride, or use public transportation)	How will I get there in the future? (Such as bus, rideshare, or ride with a friend)
Meet friends for lunch	Drive myself	Get a ride from a friend

Consider a driver refresher course. Some insurers give a discount on your car insurance for taking a course:

- AARP (888) 687-2277 or www.aarp.org
- AAA (800) 222-4357 or www.aaa.com

MyMobility Tip Practice safe behaviors, such as always wearing a seat belt, as a driver or a passenger.

For more information visit: bit.ly/CDC-MyMobilityPlan

MySelf A plan to stay independent MyHome A plan to stay safe at home MyNeighborhood A plan to stay mobile in my community

Make a plan today Stay independent tomorrow

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



Resources



➤ Educational Materials

HOME FALL PREVENTION CHECKLIST

Unintentional falls are the leading cause of injury death among adults aged 65 years and older. Most falls occur at home and happen in predictable, preventable ways. Use the checklist below to keep you or your loved one safe. [Learn more: falls.health.ok.gov](http://falls.health.ok.gov)



Bedrooms: Look at all your bedrooms.

- Is the light near the bed?
- Place a lamp close to the bed.
- Is the path from the bed clear?

MEDICATION SAFETY TIPS FOR SENIORS



Medications, even death, here are a few safety tips:

TAKE

MEDICATION ONLY AS NEEDED
Some medications for short-term use treat certain symptoms that are expected to stop. If the symptoms persist, notify your doctor promptly.

Herbal supplements, vitamins, and pain relievers. Keep an updated list of all medications and bring it to your doctor or pharmacist.

CAUTION

READ AND FOLLOW
all precautions or medication labels. They often are shown as illustrations or stickers.

STerilize your doctor or pharmacist. Be aware of side effects, such as dizziness, drowsiness, or adverse reactions or interactions.

TELL

ALL DOCTORS WHAT THE OTHERS HAVE PRESCRIBED
Make sure your primary doctor knows of any medications prescribed by other doctors or specialists, and vice versa.

FEWER

PHARMACIES, FEWER PROBLEMS
Try to fill as many prescriptions as possible at the same pharmacy or chain to better monitor any potential interactions and contraindications.



KEEP

INTRODUCING YOURSELF
Be careful upon admittance and discharge from a hospital, nursing home or emergency room. Make sure all the various health professionals know you, your medical history and your medication schedule. Request a full explanation, preferably in writing, of any change they make to your medications.

BEWARE

OF "DROWSY" MEDICATIONS
Some medications cause drowsiness and can increase the chance of falling down. If you take such medications, ask your doctor if there are safer alternatives.

Injury Prevention Brief PREVENTING FALLS

Every week, 9 older adults die and 124 are hospitalized from a fall-related injury in Oklahoma.

PREVENTION

Falls in homes are entirely preventable.

Homes in homes should be well-lit. Put in brighter light bulbs, and install night lights. Clear clutter and tripping hazards cause falls. Make sure all pathways are clear and clean. Bathrooms should be well-lit, clear of objects and have handrails on both sides. Install grab bars next to and inside the tub and next to the toilet. Use non-slip mats in the bathtub and on shower floors.

Medications with hip or bone weakness, arthritis, osteoporosis and blood pressure medications are more prone to falls.

Ask your doctor to assess your risk of falling. Review your history of recent falls. Have your vision and hearing checked annually.

CAUTION

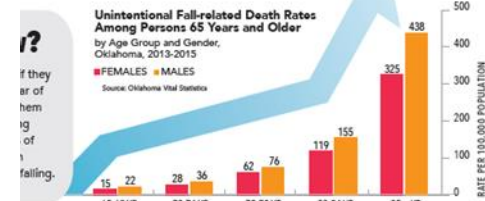
Medications have side effects that can affect an older adult's coordination and balance, such as dizziness, confusion or sleepiness.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review all medications, including prescriptions, over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and minerals. Make sure medications are properly labeled and there are clear instructions for usage.

EXERCISE

Because older adults fear that exercise may lead to a fall, but regular physical activity is one of the best defenses against falls and fractures.

Many communities offer group exercise classes, such as water aerobics and Tai Chi. Tai Chi uses slow, flowing movements to help relax and coordinate the mind and body. Weight-bearing exercise, like walking or climbing stairs, helps slow bone loss from osteoporosis and increase muscle strength.

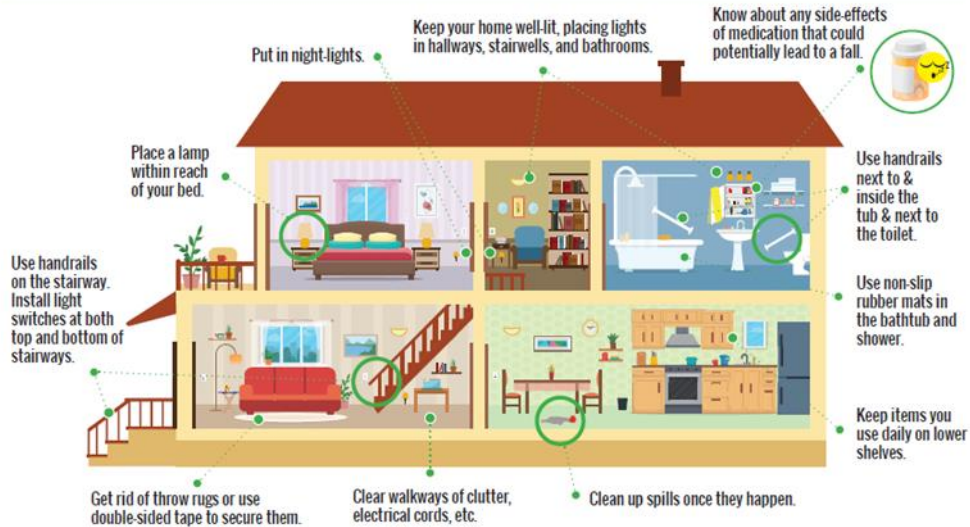


Home Safety Guide



PREVENTING FALLS

Unintentional falls are the leading cause of injury death among adults aged 65 years and older. Most falls occur at home and happen in predictable, preventable ways. Here are home safety tips to keep you or your loved one safe.



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➤ National Council on Aging: AgeWellPlanner

The screenshot shows the AgeWellPlanner website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the NCOA logo, "AgeWellPlanner", and links for "About NCOA", "Create Account", and "Log In". Below the navigation bar are tabs for "My Planner", "Finance", "Medicare", "Health & Wellness", and "Employment". The main heading is "Health & Wellness" with the subtext "Explore health and wellness resources, tools, and expert advice". There are three sub-sections: "Recommended", "All Resources", and "Health & Wellness Assistance Programs". A "Start Here" section lists popular resources: "Take Steps to Prevent Falls" (with a "Start Assessment" button), "Seven Tips for Aging Well" (with a "Read Resource" button), "Learn about our mission, the work we do, the people we serve, and why equitable aging matters now more than ever." (with a "Learn More" button), "5 Healthy Aging Tips Every Woman Should Know" (with a "Read Resource" button), "18 Steps to Fall Proofing Your Home" (with a "Read Resource" button), and "Where to Get Food Help Now" (with a "Read Resource" button). A "Load More Resources" button is at the bottom.

Important Health & Wellness Considerations

Healthy Aging
Staying healthy is important at any age. These resources offer tips to help you feel your best on your aging journey.
[Learn More →](#)

Falls Prevention
Many people think falls are a normal part of aging. The truth is, they're not—most falls can be prevented. Learn what you can do to reduce your risk.
[Learn More →](#)

Nutrition & Food Assistance
As we age, eating a healthy, balanced diet is critical. Explore resources about the importance of nutrition and for help in buying healthy foods.
[Learn More →](#)

Explore the Age Well Planner

Finance

[Explore More →](#)
[Find Benefits →](#)

Explore All Benefits

[Find Benefits →](#)

Medicare

[Explore More →](#)
[Find Benefits →](#)

My Planner

[Go to My Planner →](#)
[My Saved Items →](#)

Employment

[Explore More →](#)

➤ Falls Free CheckUp

Falls Free CheckUp

Stay healthy and independent by checking your risk for a fall.

English ▾

Falls are not a natural part of aging. Even if you're healthy or have talked with your health care provider, it's important to check your risk. There are many steps you can take to prevent a fall. Answer 13 simple questions to get your falls risk score and resources to prevent falls.

Optional

Whose information will you be providing? ⓘ

Choose one



I have fallen in the past year. * ⓘ

- Yes
- No

I use or have been advised to use a cane or walker to get around safely. * ⓘ

- Yes
- No

Sometimes I feel unsteady when I am walking. * ⓘ

- Yes
- No

I steady myself by holding onto furniture when walking at home. * ⓘ

- Yes
- No

I am worried about falling. * ⓘ

- Yes
- No

I need to push with my hands to stand up from a chair. * ⓘ

- Yes
- No

I have some trouble stepping up onto a curb. * ⓘ

- Yes
- No

I often have to rush to the toilet. * ⓘ

- Yes
- No

I have lost some feeling in my feet. * ⓘ

- Yes
- No

I take medicine that sometimes makes me feel light-headed or more tired than usual. * ⓘ

- Yes
- No

I take medicine to help me sleep or improve my mood. * ⓘ

- Yes
- No

I often feel sad or depressed. * ⓘ

- Yes
- No

Save & Continue



➤ MyMobility Plan



What can you do to stay independent?

Many people make financial plans for retirement, but not everyone plans for other changes that may come with age. This includes changes in your mobility—your ability to get around.

It's not easy to talk about, but as we get older, physical changes can make it harder to get around and do things we want or need to do—like driving, shopping, or doing household chores.

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

You might not have mobility problems now, but you could in the future. You may even know others who already do—perhaps a parent, relative, friend, or neighbor. While it may not be possible to prevent all of these changes, there are actions you and your loved ones can take today, and as you age, to help keep you safe and independent tomorrow.

MySelf
A plan to stay independent

MyHome
A plan to stay safe at home

MyNeighborhood
A plan to stay mobile in my community



**Make a plan today.
Stay independent tomorrow.**

MySelf ... A plan to stay independent

Staying healthy and managing chronic conditions help maintain your mobility.

To start building your plan, complete the checklist below.

- Get a physical checkup each year.**
- Get a medical eye exam each year.**

Some health issues may increase your risk of falling (such as leg weakness and balance problems).

Last Exam Date: _____

Next Exam Date: _____

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

Last Exam Date: _____

Next Exam Date: _____

- Review all your medicines with a doctor or pharmacist.**

Certain medicines can have side effects that can change your ability to drive, walk, or get around safely.

To learn more, go to:

<https://go.usa.gov/xPADs>

MyMobility Tip

Good eyesight is about more than 20/20 vision. For example, you need to see well in the dark to drive safely at night.

Get a medical eye exam each year and address any issues.

- Follow a regular activity program to increase your strength and balance.**

Strength and balance activities, done at least 3 times a week, can reduce your risk of falling. Other activities, like walking, are good for you, but don't help prevent falls. Visit the National Institute on Aging's website for suggestions:

www.go4life.nia.nih.gov/exercises

Strength Activity		Balance Activity	
Exercise	Start Date	Exercise	Start Date
Chair stand	Next Monday	Tai Chi	Next Monday

➤ MyMobility Plan

MyHome | A plan to stay safe at home



To continue your plan, schedule a time to go through the following home safety checklist to help prevent falls.

Check the FLOORS in each room and reduce tripping hazards:

- Keep objects off the floor.
- Remove or tape down rugs.
- Coil or tape cords and wires next to the wall and out of the way.

Check the KITCHEN:

- Put often-used items within easy reach (about waist level).
- For items not within easy reach, always use a step stool and never use a chair.

Check the BEDROOMS:


- Use bright light bulbs.
- Place lamps close to the bed where they are within reach.
- Put in night-lights to be able to see a path in the dark. For areas that don't have electrical outlets, consider battery-operated lights.

Check inside and outside STAIRS and STEPS:

- Check for loose or uneven steps. Repair if needed.
- Make sure carpet is firmly attached to every step, or remove carpet and attach non-slip rubber treads.
- Check for loose or broken handrails. Repair if needed.
- Consider installing handrails on both sides of the stairs.
- Use bright overhead lighting at the top and bottom of the stairs.
- Consider putting light switches at both the top and bottom of the stairs.

Check the BATHROOMS:

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

MyMobility Tip 

Falls are more likely when wearing inappropriate footwear, such as flip flops that don't cover the heel. Wear safe shoes that fit well, have a firm heel to provide stability, and have a textured sole to prevent slipping.

For more home modification information and resources: <https://go.usa.gov/xUEs3>

MyNeighborhood | A plan to stay mobile in my community



Finish your plan by filling out the table below.

Think of all the places you go and how you get there.

Then, consider how you would get to these same places if you couldn't use your current way.

Find transportation options in your ZIP code:


- Rides in Sight
1-855-607-4337
www.ridesinsight.org

Ride share services can help keep you connected to family and friends. Staying social helps maintain quality of life as you age.

Where do I go now? <small>(Such as doctor, grocery store, or physical activity class)</small>	How do I get there now? <small>(Such as drive, get a ride, or use public transportation)</small>	How will I get there in the future? <small>(Such as bus, rideshare, or ride with a friend)</small>
<i>Meet friends for lunch</i>	<i>Drive myself</i>	<i>Get a ride from a friend</i>

Consider a driver refresher course.

- Some insurers give a discount on your car insurance for taking a course:
- AARP (888) 687-2277 or www.aarp.org
 - AAA (800) 222-4357 or www.aaa.com

MyMobility Tip 

Practice safe behaviors, such as always wearing a seatbelt, as a driver or a passenger.

For more information visit:
www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/older_adult_drivers/mymobility

Questions?

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Oklahoma.gov/health