Take a Stand to Prevent Falls

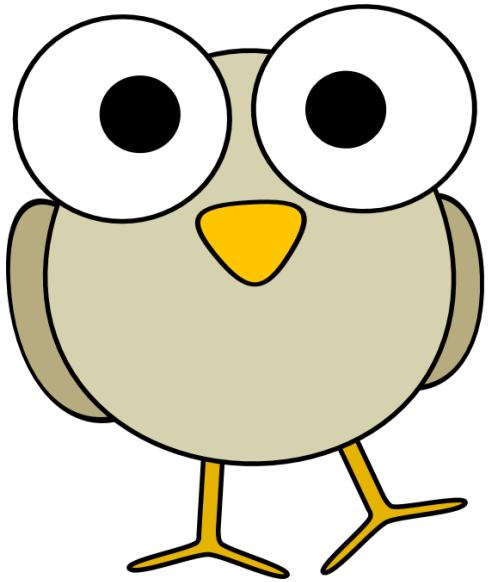


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Falls Prevention Presentation
Developed by AOTA and
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Are falls preventable?



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YES!

Falls are largely preventable!
Come learn how.

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Today's Discussion

- Definition of a fall
- Fear of falling
- Risk factors for falling
- Action steps to reduce YOUR fall risk



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What is a fall?

- Landing on the ground or some other lower surface when you didn't intend to be there
- Includes slips, trips, etc.



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Have you had a fall?

- Have you had a fall in the past year?
- Were you hurt?
- Do you worry about falling?
- Do you feel unsteady when standing or walking?

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Do you limit activities?

- **Fear of Falling** is a lasting concern about falling that may cause a person to stop doing activities s/he remains able to do.

  Tinetti & Powell, 1993



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Why does a fear of falling matter?

- May stop you from activities
- Legs weaken with inactivity
- Inactivity leads to falls
- May make the person feel alone
- May cause depression



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Boyd & Stevens, 2009; Donoghue, Cronin, Savva, O'Reagan, & Kenny, 2013; Painter et al., 2012

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Types of 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



CDC, 2014c

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Risk Factors

You CAN change

- Physical inactivity
- Home environment
- Vision
- Medication Use
- Fear of falling
- Social isolation
- Weakness
- Improper use of assistive devices

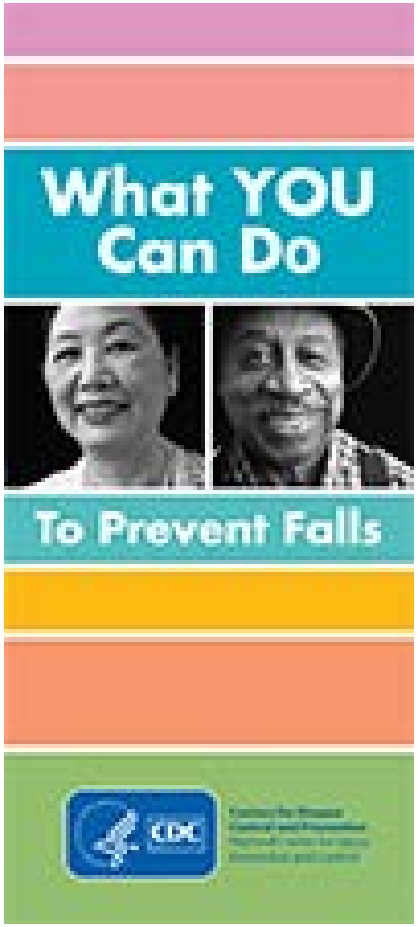
You CAN'T change

- Age
- Gender
- Ethnic background

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What can YOU do to prevent falls?

- Exercise to improve you balance and strength
- Have your doctor or pharmacist review your medicines
- Have your vision checked
- Make your home safer



CDC, 2014d

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Exercise Recommendations



Photo courtesy of the National Council on Aging

- 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!

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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

CDC, n.d.



CDC, 2014a

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Medications and Falls Risk

- Side effects may make you dizzy
- Medication changes can increase fall risk
- Use one pharmacy
- Review your medications each year
- Be sure you can read your labels



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Vision and Falls Risk



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- 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.

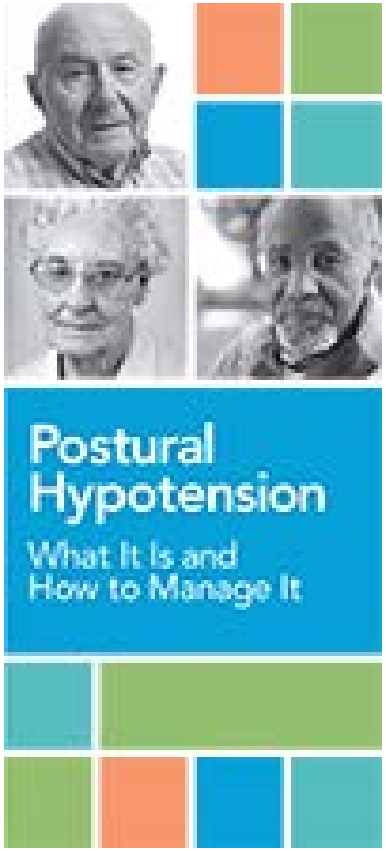
AGS & BGS, 2010

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Blood Pressure and Fall Risk

- 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.

AGS/BGS, 2010; Panel on Prevention, 2011



CDC, 2014b

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Chronic Conditions May Contribute to Your Fall Risk

- Diabetes
- Arthritis
- Stroke
- Multiple Sclerosis (MS)
- Parkinson's Disease
- Chronic Pain
- Depression
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

AGS & BGS, 2010; Panel on Prevention, 2011

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Risk of Falling May Increase

- Change in your medications
- Illness or infection
- Pain
- Lack of sleep
- Being sad or worried
- Reduced activity level
- Move to new home
- Change in use of cane or walker



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Start Small

Choose one risk factor to address

- **Pharmacist & Doctor —** review medications for side effects that may cause you to fall
- **Occupational Therapist —** home assessment and recommendations to make your home safer
- **Physical Therapist —** help with physical activity, balance, strength, and moving safely

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After 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.
- Check for safety hazards.
- Learn how to get up safely.



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Evidence-Based Fall Prevention Programs

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Otago Exercise Program (OEP)

- Done one-to-one with a trained PT and is delivered as part of a complete PT program
- Includes exercise and walking program designed for you
- If you or your physician feel you should begin with PT, be sure your PT includes the OEP
- Great start for later Stepping On® (SO) program



Photo courtesy of the National Council on Aging

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Matter of Balance

- Eight weekly 2-hour sessions including peer group discussion, exercise, education, and some behavior modification
- All exercises can be done in sitting or supported standing
- Excellent for people who are fearful of falling

- Great start for later Stepping On
- Visit http://www.mainehealth.org/mob



Photo Courtesy of the National Council on Aging

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Stepping On® (SO)

- Seven weekly 2-hour classes including peer discussion, exercise, expert lectures
- Great follow-up to Otago (OEP)
- SO classes include standing exercises that are done by a chair independently
- You should feel safe standing and walking independently before you begin SO
- Visit https://wihealthyaging.org/stepping-on

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Tai Chi



Courtesy of the National Council on Aging

- Fantastic program for ongoing fitness and balance training
- Does not include educational component
- Classes are usually on-going and not limited to certain weeks
- Participants should be able to stand on one leg for 5 seconds

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Finding Evidence-Based Falls Prevention Programs

- Local Senior Center
- Area Agency on Aging www.eldercare.gov or 1-800-677-1116
- Hospitals or health clinics
- YMCA for programs like Tai Chi



Photo courtesy of the National Council on Aging

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REMEMBER

Move More!

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Evidence-Based Resources

- **National Council on Aging**
  - Provides information on evidence-based falls prevention programs, state falls prevention coalitions, consumer material and the 2015 Falls Free® National Action Plan
  - https://www.ncoa.org/healthy-aging/falls-prevention/falls-prevention-programs-for-older-adults/

- **Falls Free® Initiative**
  - Provides resources and evidence-based practice to reduce fall-related injuries and death among older adults
  - http://www.ncoa.org/improve-health/center-for-healthy-aging/falls-prevention/falls-free-initiative.html

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Thank You for Coming!

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