

# Falls

Don't do it!

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# How big is the problem

- One out of three older adults (those aged 65 or older) falls each year but less than half talk to their healthcare providers about it.
- Among older adults, falls are the leading cause of both fatal and nonfatal injuries.



# How big is the problem

- In 2013, 2.5 million nonfatal falls among older adults were treated in emergency departments and more than 734,000 of these patients were hospitalized.
- In 2012, the direct medical costs of falls, adjusted for inflation, were \$30 billion.



# What outcomes are linked to falls?

- 20-30% of people who fall suffer moderate to severe injuries such as lacerations, hip fractures, and head traumas
- Falls are the most common cause of traumatic brain injuries (TBI)
- In 2000, 46% of fatal falls among older adults were due to TBI





# What outcomes are linked to falls?

- Most fractures among older adults are caused by falls. The most common are fractures of the spine, hip, forearm, leg, ankle, pelvis, upper arm, and hand.
- Many people develop a fear of falling. This fear may cause them to limit their activities, which leads to reduced mobility and loss of physical fitness, and in turn increases their actual risk of falling.



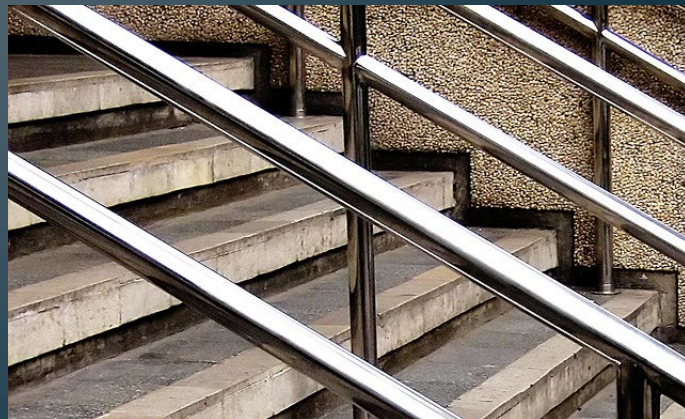
# How can we prevent falls?

- Exercise regularly. It is important that the exercises focus on increasing leg strength and improving balance, and that they get more challenging over time. Tai Chi programs are especially good.
- Ask their doctor or pharmacist to review their medicines—both prescription and over-the counter—to identify medicines that may cause side effects or interactions such as dizziness or drowsiness.



# How can we prevent falls?

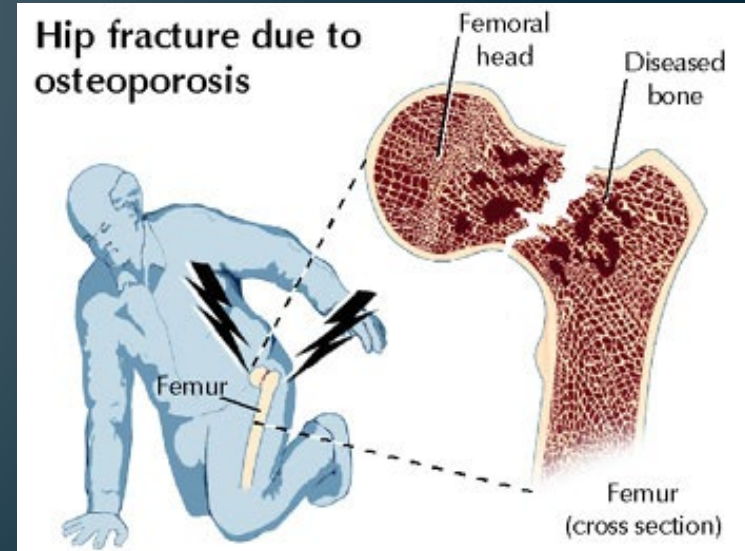
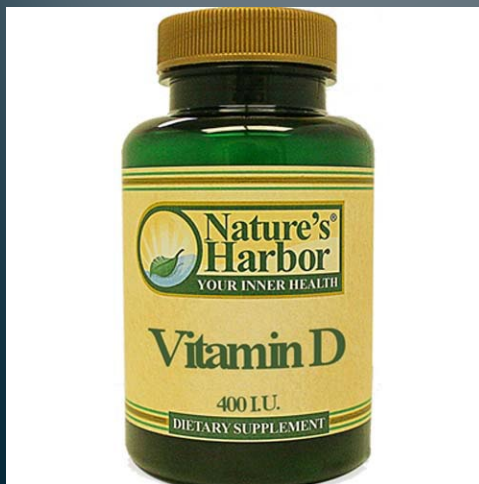
- Have their eyes checked by an eye doctor at least once a year and update their eyeglasses to maximize their vision. Consider getting a pair with single vision distance lenses for some activities such as walking outside.
- Make their homes safer by reducing tripping hazards, adding grab bars inside and outside the tub or shower and next to the toilet, adding railings on both sides of stairways, and improving the lighting in their homes.





# To lower hip fracture risk, older adults can

- Get adequate calcium and vitamin D—from food and/or from supplements.
- Do weight bearing exercise.
- Get screened and, if needed, treated for osteoporosis





# Checklist for hazards in *each* room

Clear path to walk through a room

Remove rugs or anchor them so they do not slip

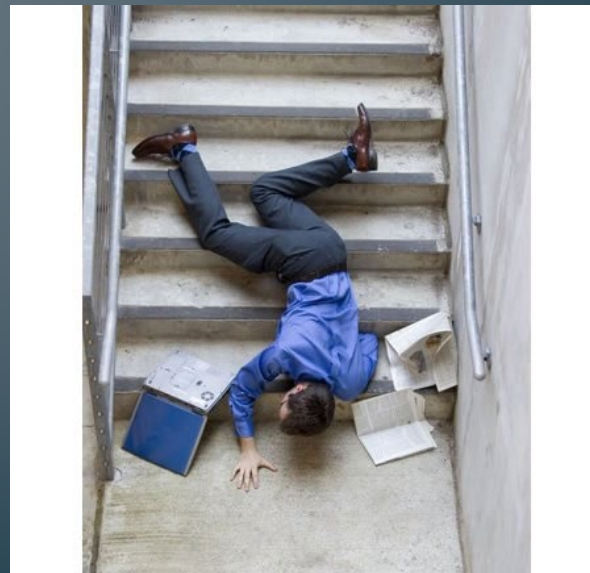
Keep objects off the floor

Coil or tape wires or cords



# Stairs and Step (inside and outside)

- Clear any objects on stairs
- Fix uneven or broken steps
- Overhead light and switch at top and bottom of stairs
- Fix loose carpet on stairs
- Fix loose or broken hand rails on both sides of stairs



# Kitchen

- Place frequently used things off top shelf
- Use only steady step stool that has a bar to hold



YES



NO



# Bathrooms

- Nonslip rubber mat on floor of shower or tub
- Use support bar for shower, tub or toilet





# Bedrooms

- Place lamp close to bed where it is easy to reach
- Put nightlight on so you can see where you are walking



# Other things to do to prevent a fall

- Exercise regularly
- See your Doc regularly...review meds for any that can cause dizziness or sleepiness
- Vision checked yearly
- Get up slowly from a sitting or lying position
- Wear shoes inside and outside-Avoid barefoot or slippers
- Improve lighting in your house...consider florescent
- Paint a contrasting color on the top edge of all steps for better visual

- Thank you for not falling !
- Any questions?



I have one....

Can you get up off the floor if you have fallen?

- Future prevention for falls
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ztjr5AKbWk0>
- Practice falling
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=saevjhoOrHI>