

LEARN ABOUT

FACTS ABOUT FALLS



This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider

Falls Are Serious

- Falls are a big problem for many older adults
- About 1 out of 10 falls causes an injury that makes an older person stay in bed or go to the doctor
- Around 3 million older adults go to the emergency room each year because of a fall
- About 1 million older adults are hospitalized after falling
- Almost 319,000 older adults are hospitalized because they broke their hip from a fall
- Most hip injuries and hip-related deaths in older adults are caused by falls
- Falls are the main cause of serious head injuries called Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI)

Falls Can Be Costly

- Falls can lead to expensive emergency room visits and hospital stays
- Injuries such as hip fractures and TBIs often require long recovery times and ongoing medical care

Factors That Contribute to Falls

- Weak leg muscles
- Low vitamin D
- Trouble with walking or balance
- Medicines like sleeping pills or antidepressants
- Some over-the-counter (store bought) medicines
- Vision problems
- Foot pain or poorly fitting shoes
- Home hazards like uneven steps, loose rugs, or clutter

What Can Happen After a Fall

- Broken bones such as wrists, arms, ankles, or hips
- Head injuries which can be serious, especially for people taking blood thinners
- A need to see a doctor right away if a person hits their head
- Less activity, which weakens muscles and increases fall risk
- Fear of falling may stop people from doing activities they enjoy