

Fall Prevention

What can you do?



Falls Prevention Organizations

Why

▪ Nationally

- Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
- The National Council on Aging (NCOA)
- Medicare/Medicaid
- National Institute of Health

▪ Locally

- SD Health Department
- SD Trauma Centers
- South Dakota Falls Prevention Coalition

- **1 in 4 people over the age of 65+ fall every year**
- **10,000 Americans are turning 65 daily**
- **Fall are the Leading Cause of Fatal and Nonfatal Injuries**
- **29 Million are treated in Emergency Departments yearly**
 - 800,000 patients then are hospitalized
 - 27,000 Die
- **Every 20 Minutes an older adult dies related to a fall**
- **Average Cost of a hospital stay is \$30,000**
- **Total cost per year \$50 Billion and rising**

Injuries & Hospitalizations

**1 in every 5 Falls
Results in a Serious
Injury**

- Head Injuries-Brain Bleeds
- Broken Bones
 - Wrist
 - Lower Arms
 - Ankle
 - Hips- 95% of hip fractures are related to falls

The Fall Cycle



Risks Factors

**History
of a Fall**

Medications

**Age
Related
Changes**

- **Vision**
- **Hearing**
- **Gait**
- **Strength**
- **Balance**

- **Starting or Changing**
- **Side effects**
- **Interactions**
- **Types of Medications**
 - Blood Pressure
 - Anxiety
 - Sleep Aids
 - Mood Stabilization
 - Seizure Medications

Medical Conditions Related To Falls

Heart

- **Slow or Fast Heart Rate**
- **Rhythm changes**
- **Blood Pressure- Postural Hypotension**

Muscle Skeletal

- **Parkinson's**
- **Muscle Weakness**
- **Joint Instability – Hips and Ankles**

Nervous System

- **Neuropathy**
- **Fibromyalgia**

Preventing Falls:

What Can You Do?

Speak Up and Advocate For Yourself *ASSERTIVENESS*

- Talk openly with your healthcare provider about fall risks and prevention
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review your medications
- Let children know what you need

Making Home Safer

- Inside
- Outside

Yearly Exams

- Primary Care
- Vision
- Hearing

Start or Keep Moving

- Fall Prevention Program
- Exercise Classes
 - Strength
 - Balance
 - Endurance

Making Your Home Safer:

Kitchen

Keep things you use frequently on lower shelves: Recommended about waist height

If you must use a step stool, use one with a bar to hold on to. Never use a chair as a step stool.

Making Your Home Safer: Bathroom

Install grab bars in the bathroom next to or inside the tub and/or toilet

Install a non-slip tub mat or safety strips in tub/shower

High Rise Toilet or Add a Toilet Riser

Making Your Home Safer: Bedroom

Place a lamp close to the bed that is within reach.

Night lights

Keep C-Pap machines, cords and tubing on side opposite of where you get in and out of bed

Use an assistive devices

Making Your Home Safer: Stairs

Keep Clutter Off the Steps

Change Lightbulbs When Burnt Out

Fix or Replace Loose Railings

Repair Any loose or Uneven Steps

Make sure carpet is firmly attached

Install Lights & Switches at Top & Bottom of Stairs

Making Your Home Safer:

Floors

Throw Rugs

- Remove Old Rugs
- Secure with Double Sided Tape

Furniture

- Space so you have a clear Path to Walk
- Don't Walk On

Unneeded Items or Clutter

- Paper /Mail
- Books/Magazines
- Jacket Shoes

Cords and Wires

- Coil or tape/secure wires or cords to floor

Making Your Home Safer: Outside

Outdoors

- Gardening
- Mowing
- Spring Fall Clean up
- Snow Removable

During Winter months

- Use ice melt on steps and walkways
- Keep a container with a scoop close to the door

Stair Railings

- Railings should be installed on outdoor steps

Garage

- Clear path of any clutter
- Watch for water puddles from snow

Tips: Traveling

Pack Your Own Nightlight

Bring and use assistive devices

Create a clear path to the bathroom

Sleep on the same side of the bed as you do at home

Many people fall when traveling, visiting friends or relatives

Tips: Grandchildren and Pets

Pets and Grandchildren can pose tripping hazards or knock you off balance

You may need to have pets secured during your visit or at night

Talk to your family about toys, games, etc., on the floor, and steps and removing clutter

Tips: Footwear

If you struggle with balance skip the fancy shoes
Form over Fashion

Shoes to Avoid:

- High Heels
- Narrow Heeled
- Worn out, stretched or loose
- Flip Flops

Shopping for shoes:

- Shop in the mid-afternoon
- Try on shoes with socks
- Bring orthotics or insoles when shopping
- Try on both shoes
- Buy shoes based on fit, not size
- Wear them around the house for a couple of days to make sure they fit well
- It is okay to return

Recommendations:

- Sturdy, nonskid soles
- Well fitted – should be snug enough so they're not sliding around
- Has enough room for an orthotic or insole if required

Myth or Fact

Falls happen and normal for older adults-

Limiting activity will keep me from falling-

Stay at home is the best place to help avoid falling-

Using assistive devices makes me dependent-

Myth or Fact

Yearly-Primary Care, Hearing and Vision checks are important to injury prevention

Talking with family and children will lead to my independence taken away-

Exercise does not matter: muscle strength & flexibility can not be regained-

Medications have no increased risk factors for falling-

Once I get to be an older adult, traveling, doing things I like or seeing grandkids will need to stop-



SOUTH DAKOTA
Fall Prevention
COALITION

#PreventFallsSD

Vision

Older South Dakotans will have fewer falls and fall-related injuries, maximizing their independence and quality of life.

Mission

Cultivate collaboration to reduce falls by increasing knowledge and promotion of evidence-based fall prevention solutions for older adults.

