

# Falls Prevention Awareness Week

September 18-22, 2023

#PreventFallsSD

## SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGES

### Video

***Most falls are preventable.***

Start with these six easy steps to help reduce your risk:

1. Find a balance or exercise program
2. Talk to your doctor
3. Review medications
4. Get your vision and hearing checked yearly
5. Keep your home safe
6. Talk to your family

**Video URL:** <https://youtu.be/97MrLqw1aro>

**Spanish:**

***La mayoría de las caídas se pueden prevenir.***

Comience con estos seis sencillos pasos para ayudar a reducir su riesgo:

1. Encuentra un equilibrio o un programa de ejercicios
2. Hable con su médico
3. Revisar medicamentos
4. Hágase revisar la vista y la audición anualmente
5. Mantén tu casa Segura
6. Habla con tu familia

**Video URL:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Sb4ADVTtrY>

### Testimonials

***What South Dakotan's are saying about Evidence Based Fall Prevention Programs.***

“When I put on my jeans, I used to try to try to put my leg in, and I would have to go down, and then I would have to go down and then I would have to go down. And now I can just put that leg in and pull those jeans up. And now that probably sounds like nothing to someone else, but it was big for me.”

(SAIL Participant)

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## News Options

### PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contact: Leacey Brown, MS

[PreventFallsSD@gmail.com](mailto:PreventFallsSD@gmail.com)

Prevent Falls and Maximize Quality of Life for Older South Dakotans

The South Dakota Falls Prevention Coalition is observing Falls Prevention Awareness Week. The week will be observed September 18-22, 2023, in conjunction with the National Council on Aging. The week is an opportunity to raise awareness about how to prevent falls among older adults. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), one of four older Americans fall each year, and a single fall doubles the chance of falling again.

“Falls are devastating to individuals and families. When an individual experiences a fall, it has a domino effect on their quality of life,” explained Leacey Brown, MS, chair of the South Dakota Falls Prevention Coalition. “Beyond the challenges from recovering from the falls, older adults who have experienced a fall often develop a fear in falling again.”

In South Dakota, [37% of people are afraid of falling](#): a legitimate concern as the state rated [third in the nation](#) for most fatalities from falls. In 2021, The South Dakota State Department of Health reported [Accidental Falls](#) as the 6<sup>th</sup> leading cause for death. For Americans 65 and older the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported falls as the leading cause for fatal accidents and 3 million are treated in emergency departments for fall injuries each year.

Having done the research, Brown recognized a need and gathered a group of community and healthcare stakeholders to form the South Dakota Falls Prevention Coalition.

“The efforts for the South Dakota Falls Prevention Coalition are to increase awareness among those at risk for falling and those who can identify and support someone with a higher risk for falling,” said Brown.

“People tend to believe falls are a normal part of getting older.” Leacey expanded. “Many have a misplaced belief that reducing their level of physical activity will prevent a fall. What we know is lack of physical activity increases the risk of a fall and contributes to a vicious cycle.”

Partners within the coalition are offering a variety of evidence-based fall prevention programs to assist older adults minimize their risk of falling. Classes like A Matter of Balance, Bingocize®, Staying Active and Independent for Life (SAIL), and [Walk with Ease](#) focus on increased physical activity and confidence to reduce fall risk, while [Fit & Strong!](#) is intended for those managing the symptoms of arthritis to reduce joint pain through exercise. Typically offered as an in-person program, self-guided and virtual platforms have been developed to increase availability.

With the help of healthcare providers, Brown considers fall prevention as the goal, “Individuals follow the recommendation of their healthcare provider. By encouraging screening for fall risk and

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providing referrals to evidence-based fall prevention programs, we can intervene before the fall occurs.”

Those interested in joining or learning more about the South Dakota Falls Prevention Coalition are encouraged to reach out to [PreventFallsSD@gmail.com](mailto:PreventFallsSD@gmail.com).

## NEWS POST

### Reduce the Risk of a Life-Changing Fall

The darting pet, hallway rug or late-night trip to the bathroom can quickly change from a nuisance to a life-changing fall experience. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), one of four older Americans fall each year, and a single fall doubles the chance of falling again. Falls Prevention Awareness Week, held September 18-22, 2023, is an opportunity to raise awareness about how to prevent falls among older adults.

“Falls are devastating to individuals and families. When an individual experiences a fall, it has a domino effect on their quality of life,” explained Leacey Brown, MS, chair of the South Dakota Falls Prevention Coalition. “Beyond the challenges from recovering from the falls, older adults who have experienced a fall often develop a fear in falling again.”

In South Dakota, [37% of people are afraid of falling](#): a legitimate concern as the state rated [third in the nation](#) for most fatalities from falls. In 2021, The South Dakota State Department of Health reported [Accidental Falls](#) as the 6<sup>th</sup> leading cause for death. For Americans 65 and older the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported falls as the leading cause for fatal accidents and 3 million are treated in emergency departments for fall injuries each year.

“People tend to believe falls are a normal part of getting older.” Leacey expanded. “Many have a misplaced belief that reducing their level of physical activity will prevent a fall. What we know is lack of physical activity increases the risk of a fall and contributes to a vicious cycle.”

South Dakotans have access to multiple programs proven to reduce falls by building strength, balance and flexibility. Classes like A Matter of Balance, Bingocize® and [Walk with Ease](#) focus on increased physical activity and confidence to reduce fall risk, while [Fit & Strong!](#) is intended for those managing the symptoms of arthritis to reduce joint pain through exercise.

“Our first effort in the South Dakota Falls Prevention Coalition is to increase awareness among those at risk for falling and those who can identify and support someone with a higher risk for falling,” said Brown of the group’s efforts. “Individuals follow the recommendations for their healthcare provider. By encouraging screening for fall risk and referrals to evidence-based fall prevention programs, we can intervene before the fall occurs.

In addition, the coalition developed a free [SD Falls Prevention Toolkit](#) as a resource for healthcare professionals to identify and support individuals at risk for a fall. Community or healthcare facilities

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Interested in preventing falls are encouraged to access and distribute resources during Falls Prevention Awareness Week, and beyond.

For more information or to join the coalition, contact Leacey Brown at [PreventFallsSD@gmail.com](mailto:PreventFallsSD@gmail.com).

## Newsletter Excerpt

The South Dakota Falls Prevention Coalition has asked us to join in [Falls Prevention Awareness Week](#) being held September 18-22, 2023. This one-week observance is to bring national awareness to older adults and how to decrease their risk of falling. One of four older Americans fall each year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In fact, for Americans 65 and older falls are the leading cause of fatal accidents and responsible for emergency department visits for 3 million individuals.

“Falls are devastating to individuals and families. When an individual experiences a fall, it has a domino effect on their quality of life,” explained Leacey Brown, MS, chair of the South Dakota Falls Prevention Coalition. “Beyond the challenges from recovering from the falls, older adults who have experienced a fall often develop a fear in falling again.”