

Fall Prevention for Older Adults Living at Home: Key Facts and Caregiver Strategies

Essential safety tips and support methods
for caregivers



Learning Objectives

- ▶ Understanding the Risk of Falls in Older Adults
- ▶ Simple Home Modifications for Fall Prevention
- ▶ Caregiver Roles in Fall Prevention
- ▶ Resources and Support for Ongoing Safety



The background features abstract green geometric shapes. On the left, a solid green trapezoid points towards the center. On the right, a complex arrangement of overlapping, semi-transparent green triangles and polygons creates a layered, dynamic effect. The text is centered in a clean, green, sans-serif font.

Understanding the Risk of Falls in Older Adults



Prevalence of Falls in the Aging Population

Falls remain the leading cause for injury and death for older Americans.

More than one-fourth of Americans aged 65+ falls each year.

Falls result in more than 3 million injuries treated in emergency departments annually, including over 800,000 hospitalizations and more than 32,000 deaths.

One Other Big Factor to consider is:

Fear of falling



AskSAMIE

Risk Factors Specific to Older Adults

Medication Management

Basic Needs

Muscle Weakness

Not using the correct device as needed

Balance Issues



Why Fall Prevention Is Important

Avoiding Injuries

Fall prevention significantly reduces the risk of injuries, promoting safety for older adults in their homes.

Maintaining Independence

Preventing falls helps older adults maintain their independence and continue daily activities without assistance.

Reducing Healthcare Costs

Effective fall prevention lowers medical expenses by minimizing hospital visits and rehabilitation needs.

Improving Quality of Life

Fall prevention enhances overall well-being, ensuring a better quality of life for seniors living at home.

Assessing Your Own Fall Risk

- ▶ Timed Up and Go
 - ▶ Sit in a chair.
 - ▶ Walk 10 feet.
 - ▶ Turn around and sit back down.
 - ▶ Timer starts when you start to get up and ends once seated.
- ▶ An older adult who takes longer than 12 seconds is at an increased risk for falls.



► Functional Reach Test

- Stand up.
- Put one arm up at 90 degrees with fist closed.
- Lean forward and reach as far as you can without taking a step or falling.

- A score of 6” or less indicates a significant risk for falls.
- A score between 6”- 11” indicates a moderate fall risk



Assessing Your Own Fall Risk

Simple Home Modifications for Fall Prevention



Removing Tripping Hazards



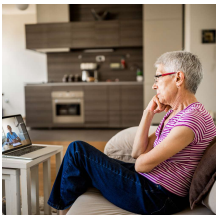
Remove Loose Rugs

Removing loose rugs prevents slipping and tripping accidents in home walkways.



Clear Clutter

Keeping walkways free of clutter (including electrical cords) reduces fall risks by providing clear paths.



Too Many Items in Area

Clearing items from your favorite spot to reduce fall risk

Improving Lighting and Visibility

Importance of Adequate Lighting

Proper lighting enhances visibility, reducing the risk of accidents for older adults in the home.

Safe Staircase Lighting and Contrasting Colors

Illuminated staircases help prevent trips and falls by clearly showing each step and having a contrasting color on the edge of each step can help the stairs not blend.

Bathroom Visibility

Good lighting in bathrooms ensures obstacles are visible, reducing fall risks in wet areas. Night lights, toilet bowl lights are great options to assist.





Bars and a No Step Entry

Role of Grab Bars

Grab bars in bathrooms provide stability and safety while bathing and toileting. (Bathrooms are the top spot of falls in adults over age 65)

No Step Entry

One no step entry to the home allows a person using an Assistive device to easily access the home.



Kitchen

- ▶ Having a wide walkway that is clear
- ▶ Using a stool as needed for prolonged activity
- ▶ Easy access to most used items and appliances
- ▶ Pull out/down shelving



Adaptive Equipment

- ▶ Shower chairs and benches
- ▶ Walkers, rollators, canes
- ▶ Bedrails or step
- ▶ Lever Handles
- ▶ Home Assessment by an Occupational Therapist or certified AIPS
- ▶ Home Health referral

As mentioned before grab bars and a no step entry!

Caregiver Roles in Fall Prevention

A photograph of an elderly person from the waist down, wearing light-colored trousers and a white short-sleeved shirt. They are walking on a paved path outdoors, holding a dark blue cane in their right hand. The background shows green foliage and a wooden railing. The image is partially covered by a dark green geometric overlay on the right side.

Observing and Reporting Changes in Mobility

Monitor Movement Changes

Caregivers need to observe any alterations in movement patterns that may indicate mobility issues early on.

Assess Balance and Behavior

Changes in balance or behavior should be carefully noted as they can signal increased fall risk.

Report to Healthcare Providers

Timely reporting of observed changes to healthcare professionals helps prevent falls and complications.



Encouraging Safe Habits and Daily Routines

Use of Assistive Devices

Consistently using assistive devices enhances stability and reduces the risk of falls during daily activities.

Proper Footwear

Wearing supportive and well-fitted footwear provides better balance and prevents slips and falls.

Avoiding Rushing

Taking time and avoiding rushing during movements greatly lowers the chance of accidental falls.



Assisting with Exercises to Improve Strength and Balance

Enhancing Stability

Assisting with exercises improves physical stability in older adults, helping prevent falls and injuries.

Strength Improvement

Supporting strength exercises helps build muscle, promoting independence and overall health in seniors.

Questions?

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