

The Simple Facts about Falling

Facts about falling:

- **Among older adults, falls are the leading cause of injury deaths.**
- More than one third of adults 65 and older fall each year in the U.S.
- They are also the most common cause of nonfatal injuries and hospital admissions for trauma.
- Fall-related deaths among older adults increased significantly in the past ten years.

What can happen after a fall?

- Death ...
 - In 2001, more than 11,600 people age 65 and older died from fall-related injuries
- Moderate to severe injury ...
 - 20 to 30 percent of people who fall experience injuries such as bruises, hip fractures, or head traumas. These injuries can
 - make it hard to get around
 - limit independent living
 - increase the risk of early death
- Traumatic brain injury (TBI) ...
 - In 2000, 46 percent of fatal falls among older adults happened because of traumatic brain injury caused by a fall
- Fractures ... the most common are of the spine, hip, forearm, leg, ankle, pelvis, upper arm and hand
- Fear of falling again ... even those who are not injured after falling may develop a strong fear which can cause them to limit activities, reduce mobility and physical fitness.
- Long-term placement ...
 - 50 percent who survive a hip fracture are discharged to a nursing home and half of those individuals remain in the nursing home for a longer time
 - People 75 and older who fall are four to five times more likely to be admitted to a long-term care facility for a year or longer

Who is at risk?

- White men have the highest fall related death rates, followed by white women, black men and black women
- Nearly 85 percent of deaths from falls in 2003 were people 75 and older

Factors that can be changed and reduce the risk for falls:

- Lower body weakness
- Problems with walking and balance
- Taking four or more medications or any psychoactive medications
- Problem areas in the home

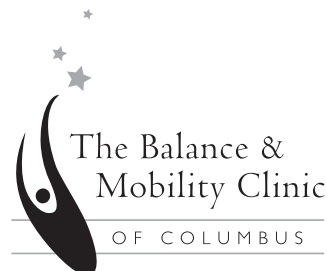
They didn't plan to fall!

Kurt Vonnegut, author
Kelsey Grammer, actor
Ed McMahon, TV host
Rev. Billy Graham, evangelist
Nancy Reagan, former First Lady
Fidel Castro, president of Cuba
Dr. Robert Atkins, weight loss guru
John Glenn, Senator and astronaut
Bob Dole, U.S. Senator

Do You Know your Balance Score?

FALLS CAN BE PREVENTED!

Your balance score is calculated by a simple non-invasive computerized test that identifies your risk for a fall. Knowing your balance score is the first step in preventing injury from a fall.



Prevention Through Intervention

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