



# Falls and Fractures

Falls are the leading cause of injuries for older Americans. 1 in 4 adults age 65 or older fall every year.<sup>1</sup> Some injuries can be serious and make it tough to stay independent, but if you take the right actions, you can help keep falls from happening.

## Factors that may increase the risk of a fall<sup>1</sup>

- 1 Vision issues**  
Having problems seeing can throw off your balance.
- 2 Hearing loss**  
Hearing issues can lead to unawareness of what's around you, causing you to trip.<sup>2</sup>
- 3 Medication**  
Some medications can affect your balance, strength or vision.
- 4 Inactivity**  
Not living an active lifestyle can affect muscle strength and joint flexibility, making it hard to walk.
- 5 Medical conditions**  
Conditions like diabetes, glaucoma, cataracts, arthritis, blocked arteries and Alzheimer's can affect your ability to get around.
- 6 Osteoporosis**  
Bones may become weaker as you age and thin bones break more easily — especially the hip, spine and wrist. Even a minor fall can cause a break and can be disabling.

## Did you know you can help prevent falls?

- Always clean up spills right away.
- Keep floors clutter free.
- Make sure carpets are secure.
- Have stair handrails installed.
- Put nonskid mats in the shower and bath.
- Use nightlights to make sure walkways are well lit.



**Talk to your doctor today about ways to prevent falls.**



## Lifestyle tips to help avoid falls and broken bones



### Stay active

Regular physical activity helps build muscle and strength. Talk with your doctor before you increase your activity level.



### Dress for safety

Wear low-heeled shoes with rubber soles for good traction. Generally, don't wear slippers, shoes with leather soles or high heels.



### Make sure you can see and hear well

Get your vision and hearing checked regularly and ask your doctor if you could benefit from some vision or hearing aids.



### Get enough sleep

Being tired can affect balance, making it easier to fall.



### Limit alcohol

If you choose to drink, do it in moderation.



### Use walking assistance devices when necessary

Use a cane, walker or crutches to help make walking easier.



### Know your bone strength

Talk to your doctor about getting a bone density screening. If you have weaker bones, your doctor can advise you on how to take steps to make them stronger.



### Check your medications

Any time you get a new prescription, ask your doctor about side effects that can affect your balance.

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<sup>1</sup>“6 Steps for Preventing Falls Among Your Older Loved Ones.” National Council on Aging, 2019.

<sup>2</sup>“Hearing Loss and the Increased Risk of Falls.” American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2019.

This information does not substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis or treatment of your physician. Always talk to your physician or a qualified health care provider about any questions you may have regarding your medical condition.

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