

## FALLS PREVENTION

No, “Endless Summer” is NOT Fall...



The statistics are not good, but the result is avoidable! The mother of one of our writers took a spill in a parking lot. Even at the “young” age of 75, hip fractures are major and combined with other ailments, especially diabetes, can have severe consequences. Falls are also a major contributor to Traumatic Brain Injury, which can have significant debilitating impacts. She lasted just 6 months, and her thoughts on the quality of life were not pleasant.

She and her caregivers were not the only ones to face this issue:

- In an average 15 seconds a senior is treated for a fall at the Emergency Room.
- 1 in 3 Americans 65 and older will have a significant fall in a given year.
- Every 29 seconds an older adult will die because of a fall.
- 47,000 Americans each year had a fall, while using a walker or cane.
- Falls have become the leading cause of death by injury for older adults

### STEPS to reduce Falls

Try to get all medications from the same pharmacy. The pharmacist can often spot combinations of prescribed medications that can make one drowsy or at higher risk for a fall. A vision check may also be helpful as one gets older too.

Have handrails and grab bars installed wherever they are helpful, especially around stairs, in bathrooms, and areas that can get slippery or icy.

Areas where the flooring is uneven, including sills and many rugs and runners can provide hazard areas which can cause a trip or fall. Choose shoes with non-slip soles that provide support without the bulk which could contribute to a trip.

Increase lighting inside/outside the home. Seniors often overlook this. Combined with vision decline especially in low light, this is waiting accident. With the advent of inexpensive LED bulbs, better lighting is a bargain – get some! The bulbs last so long they will be passed down to the kids.

Seniors may visit the bathroom more often and this can be a high-use path in poor light. Add one or more night-lights between the bedroom and bathroom. These can even be motion activated.

There are excise programs to improve **balance**. The family doctor, Area Agency on Aging, local Senior or YMCA may be a source. Use a walking aid, if needed to improve balance and stability.

You’re fine - you don’t need to do anything? Don’t fall for that!

Note: The source of data is from the US CDC&P, National Council on Aging, and National Conference of State Legislatures