



PREVENT FALLS AND FRACTURES

Tripping on a rug or slipping on a wet floor can change your life. If you fall, you could break a bone. A break can be the start of more serious problems. It could lead to a trip to the hospital, injury, or disability.

More than one in three people aged 65 years or older falls each year. The risk of falling rises with age



DISCLAIMER

Getting Help from Member Services. Our Member Services Department can answer all of your questions. You may call us at 1-833-FCC-PLAN, or TTY: 711 Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., but not on State approved holidays (like Christmas Day and Thanksgiving Day). When you call, make sure you have your identification card (ID card) with you so we can help you. If you call when we are closed, please leave a message. We will call you back the next business day. If you have an urgent question, you may call our Nurse Hotline at 1-833-FCC-PLAN, or TTY: 711. Our nurses are available to help you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Many Older Adults Fear Falling

The fear of falling is more common as you age. It may lead you to avoid activities such as walking. Or taking part in social activities.

Overcoming this fear can help you stay active. The good news is there are simple ways to prevent most falls.

Causes and Risk Factors for Falls

Many things can cause a fall. Your eyesight, hearing, and reflexes might not be as sharp as they were when you were younger. Diabetes or heart disease can affect your balance.

Risk factors to falling include muscle weakness and blood pressure that drops too much when you get up from lying down or sitting. Unsafe footwear, like backless shoes or high heels, can also increase your risk of falling.



Confusion can sometimes lead to falls. For example, if you wake up confused, wait for your mind to clear or until someone comes to help you before trying to get up and walk around.

Some medications can increase a person's risk of falling because they cause side effects like dizziness or confusion. The more medications you take, the more likely you are to fall.



Take the Right Steps to Prevent Falls

If you take care of your overall health, you may be able to lower your chances of falling. Here are a few tips to help you avoid falls and broken bones:

Stay physically active.

Regular exercise improves muscles and makes you stronger. It also helps keep you flexible. Walking may slow bone loss.

Have your eyes and hearing tested.

Even small changes in sight and hearing may cause you to fall. When you get new eyeglasses, take time to get used to them. Always wear your glasses when you need them. If you have a hearing aid, be sure it fits well and wear it.

Find out about the side effects of any medicine you take.

If a drug makes you sleepy or dizzy, tell your doctor or pharmacist. Get enough sleep.

If you are sleepy, you are more likely to fall. Limit the amount of alcohol you drink. Even a small amount of alcohol can affect your balance and reflexes. Studies show that the rate of hip fractures in older adults increases with alcohol use.

Stand up slowly.

Getting up too quickly can cause your blood pressure to drop. That can make you feel wobbly. Get your blood pressure checked when lying and standing.

Use an assistive device if you need help feeling steady when you walk.

Appropriate use of canes and walkers can prevent falls. If your doctor tells you to use a cane or walker, make sure it is the right size for you and the wheels roll smoothly. This is important when you are walking where the walkways are uneven.

Be careful when walking on wet surfaces.

They can be very slippery!

Wear non-skid, rubber-soled, low-heeled shoes. Or lace-up shoes with non-skid soles that fully support your feet.

It is important that the soles are not too thin or too thick. Do not walk on floors in socks or in shoes and slippers with smooth soles.

Always tell your doctor if you have fallen since your last checkup.

A fall can alert your doctor to a new medical problem or problems with your medications or eyesight that can be corrected. Your doctor may suggest physical therapy, a walking aid, or other steps to help prevent future falls.



What to Do If You Fall

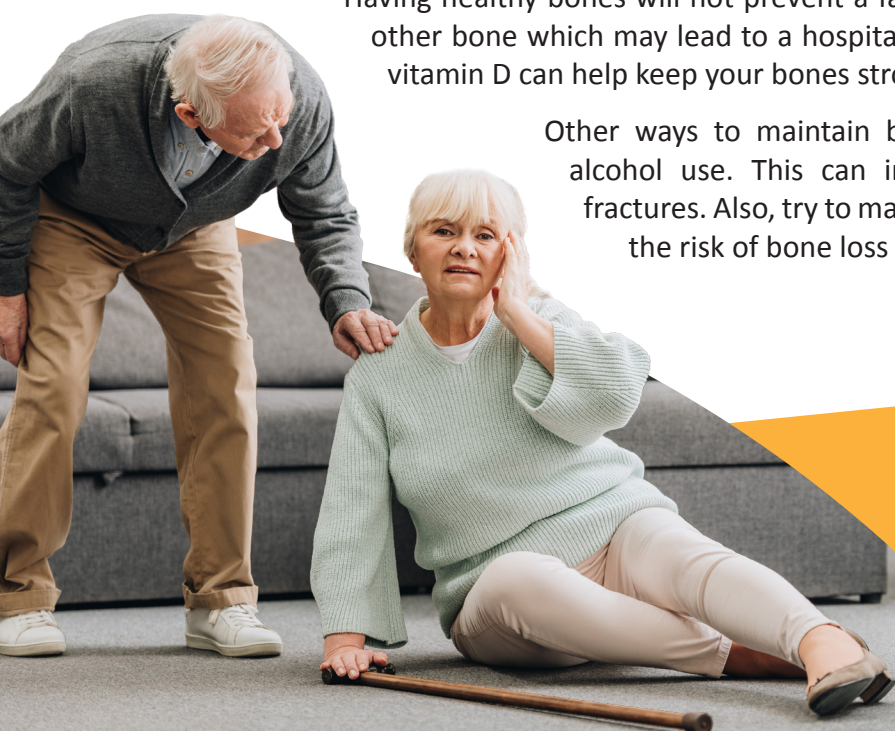
- A fall can be upsetting. If you do fall, stay as calm as possible.
- Take several deep breaths to try to relax. Remain still on the floor or ground for a few moments. This will help you get over the shock of falling.
- Decide if you are hurt before getting up. Getting up too quickly or in the wrong way could make an injury worse.
- If you think you can get up safely without help, roll over onto your side. Rest again while your body and blood pressure adjust. Slowly get up on your hands and knees, and crawl to a sturdy chair.
- Put your hands on the chair seat and slide one foot forward so that it is flat on the floor. Keep the other leg bent so the knee is on the floor. From this kneeling position, slowly rise and turn your body to sit in the chair.
- If you are hurt or cannot get up on your own, ask someone for help. If you are alone, try to get into a comfortable position and wait for help to arrive.

Keep Your Bones Strong to Prevent Falls

Falls are a common reason for trips to the emergency room and for hospital stays among older adults. Many of these hospital visits are for fall-related fractures. You can help prevent fractures by keeping your bones strong.

Having healthy bones will not prevent a fall. But if you fall, it might prevent breaking a hip or other bone which may lead to a hospital or nursing home stay. Getting enough calcium and vitamin D can help keep your bones strong. So can physical activity.

Other ways to maintain bone health include quitting smoking and limiting alcohol use. This can increase bone mass and decrease the chance of fractures. Also, try to maintain a healthy weight. Being underweight increases the risk of bone loss and broken bones.



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*The benefit information provided is a brief summary, not a complete description of benefits. Limitations, co-payments, and restrictions may apply. Benefits may change.



For more information, contact Florida Community Care at 1-833-FCC-PLAN (TTY 711 or 1-866-467-4970). This information is available for free in other languages. Please contact our customer service number at 1-833-FCC-PLAN or TTY 711, Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm. Esta información esta disponible gratis en otros idiomas. Por favor, pongase en contacto con nuestro numero de Servicios para Miembros a 1-833-FCC-PLAN o TTY 711, de lunes a Viernes de 8 a.m. a 8 p.m.