

FALLS

Fast Facts on Falls

- Falls are the leading cause of fatal and nonfatal injuries in older adults.
- 1 in 5 falls results in a broken bone or brain injury.
- More than 95% of hip fractures are caused by falling.
- Falls are the most common cause of traumatic brain injuries (TBI).
- Falls are a common reason for hospital admission or emergency room visits.
- Each year \$50 billion and \$754 million is spent in medical costs related to non-fatal fall injuries and fatal falls, respectively.

Fast Facts on Falls

Recognize and correct modifiable risk factors your resident may have for falling:

Lower body weakness | Vitamin D deficiency | vision problems | use of medications that may affect the CNS
Alcohol consumption | foot pain or poor footwear | medications that affect blood pressure | cognitive disorders

Recognize and remove environmental risk factors for falling:

Broken or uneven steps | trip hazards such as rugs, wires, and other floor clutter | missing handrails

Community healthcare providers may conduct personalized fall risk assessments to determine a resident's fall risk factors and supply considerations for their prevention plan.

The STEADI algorithm is geared to Community-Dwelling Adults aged 65 years and older. Residents who are identified as high falls risk should be made familiar to staff and located in a place they can be seen in case they require assistance.

Encourage resident or responsible party to speak with providers or pharmacists about medications that increase fall risk.

Medications of interest:

- Opioids
- Antidepressants
- Anti-Anxiety Meds
- Sleep Aids
- High Blood Pressure / Heart Meds
- Muscle Relaxants
- Antipsychotics
- Anticonvulsants

Side Effects to Look out for:

- Vision Changes
- Loss of Balance
- Decreased Reaction Time
- Fainting
- Muscle Weakness
- Loss of Muscle Coordination
- Excessive Sleepiness or Tiredness
- Drop in Blood Pressure (marked by dizziness/fainting) upon Standing

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Clients may decrease their fall risk by following these steps:

- Sit upright for at least 10 seconds before standing out of bed to avoid dizziness
- Engage in strength and balance building exercises when available
- If suffering from incontinence, consider implementing a scheduled toileting routing to minimize risky night-time trips to the bathroom. Elimination aids such as bedside commodes and bedpans can also be useful.

In Summary

- Falls are COMMON, COSTLY, and PREVENTABLE!
- Fall prevention takes education, planning, and coordination between clients, Direct Support Professionals, and Healthcare Providers.
- Medications are a major contributing factor to the fall risk for older adults, and a pharmacist consult may be helpful in reducing this risk.

Additional Resources

- [STEADI: SAFE Medication Review Framework](#)
- [STEADI: Medications Linked to Falls](#)

Work with your pharmacist and other healthcare providers to minimize drug-induced fall risk for your residents!

