Older adults account for a disproportionate share of fall-related injuries. While Ohioans age 65 and older are 13.7 percent of our population, they account for more than 80 percent of fatal falls.

**How Meal Providers Can Prevent Falls**

- Plan your delivery schedule so that staff time with the older adults you serve is not rushed.
- Identify consumers who use a walker or assistive device, and plan to spend extra time when delivering their meals.
- Monitor homes for falls hazards (cords, rugs, etc.) and educate consumers about what they can do to reduce their risk of falling.
- During winter months ask consumers if they have someone to help them keep their driveway and sidewalks clear, and provide resources if needed.
- Have and call alternate phone contacts for all consumers in case a consumer does not answer the door on a scheduled delivery day.
- Train staff to recognize consumers who regularly wear safety alert devices or use walkers, canes or wheelchairs. Empower staff to start a conversation with these consumers if they see them not using their assistive devices.
- Ask consumers if they need assistance with opening or preparing the meals.
- Designate congregate meals sites as "Fall-Free Zones" and encourage consumers to report falls risks to staff.
- At congregate meal sites, offer to assist older adults by carrying their meal tray to their table and when they are finished, offer to clear their tray.
- At congregate meal sites, keep aisles clear of obstructions and provide plenty of space between tables.
- Be aware of extreme consumer weight loss or gain. Improper nutrition may lead to muscle weakness and dizziness, which could result in a fall.
- Create a falls prevention policy for your agency and ensure that staff are aware of and understand it.

For more tips and resources to prevent falls, visit: [www.steadyu.ohio.gov](http://www.steadyu.ohio.gov)