



**Preventing Falls...
One Step at a Time**

Falls are the leading cause of injury-related deaths and the most common cause of hospital admissions for trauma in older Ohioans. Health care providers, like doctors, nurses, physical therapist, pharmacists, home health aides, senior center staff and others, are uniquely positioned to actively assess their patients' risk and teach them prevention strategies.

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 Senior Centers Can Prevent Falls

- Offer a variety of exercise classes that help to improve strength and balance.
- Allow members to watch exercises classes before signing up so they can assess their ability to safely participate.
- Add a routine fall risk assessment activity into your calendar of events.
- Keep hallway areas clear so no one is discouraged from using their wheelchair, cane or walker.
- Have railings on both sides of staircases.
- Monitor parking lots and building entrances regularly for slipping and tripping hazards.
- If your center is a congregate meal site, offer to help members by carrying their meal tray to their table and clearing it when they are finished.
- Provide plenty of space between tables in dining and activity rooms.
- Install grab bars in restrooms.
- Provide seating areas throughout the building so that members have an opportunity to rest between activities.
- Educate staff about falls risks so they can identify and remove slipping and tripping hazards.
- Create a policy for falls prevention and ensure staff are aware of and understand it.
- Empower your members to notify you of slipping, tripping, and falls hazards by placing suggestion boxes in your facility.
- Notify your local media if you have a weather-related closing so that members do not travel in poor conditions.

For more tips and resources to prevent falls, visit:

www.steadyu.ohio.gov