



## Key Points

- May is Older Americans Month, a time when we celebrate the contributions and the lives of our Golden Buckeyes.
- Golden buckeyes are inspired by their age, not defined by it - they continue to grow, thrive and contribute. When they are able to unleash their power in a variety of ways, our state is better for it.
- A fall can change everything, but falls are not a normal part of aging – most falls can be prevented.
- Falls prevention starts with small changes to the three H’s: home, health and habits.
  - **Home:** Remove throw rugs; improve lighting, especially near stairs; install grab bars in the bathroom; rearrange the home to make frequently used items easier to reach.
  - **Health:** Ask your doctor about a falls risk assessment and talk about medicines you take and whether they increase your risk for falls; have your hearing and vision checked annually.
  - **Habits:** Stay active to build muscle strength and improve balance; slow down and think through tasks; stay hydrated and eat a well-balanced diet that includes calcium-rich foods.
- Most of all, learn to not be afraid of falling. A fear of falling can cause you to make decisions and changes in your behavior that actually increase your risk (such as becoming less active, shuffling, and relying on objects around you for balance).
- STEADY U Ohio is the state’s comprehensive falls prevention initiative led by the Ohio Department of Aging and supported by Ohio government and state business partners.
- STEADY U partners are strengthening existing falls prevention activities, identifying new opportunities and raising awareness of falls prevention strategies and resources.
- Visit [www.steadyu.ohio.gov](http://www.steadyu.ohio.gov) to take a falls risk self-assessment, find easy steps to prevent falls, and learn about A Matter of Balance, a free, community-based education program to help participants see falls as something they can control.
- By taking steps to stay safe today, you can ensure that you remain healthy and independent tomorrow.



## Supporting Points

- Decreased muscle mass, vision and hearing decline, medical conditions and joint pain are some of the age-related changes that can increase falls risks.
- It is no exaggeration to call falls among older Ohioans an epidemic – falls are the number one cause of injuries leading to ER visits, hospitalizations and deaths for Ohioans age 65 and older.