



## Fall Prevention

The CDC reported more than one out of four older people falls each year, but less than half tell their doctor. Falls can lead to broken bones, head injury or fear of another fall that may make a person less active due to that fear. The good news is that many falls can be prevented.

Most falls are caused by a combination of risk factors:

- Lower body weakness
- Not enough vitamin D
- Difficulty with walking and balance
- Medications that affect balance
- Vision problems
- Foot pain or poor footwear
- Home hazards, such as throw rugs, uneven steps or clutter



Take steps to prevent falls:

- Talk to your doctor, who can evaluate your risk for falls, review your medications or discuss adding vitamin D to your diet.
- Do strength and balance exercises.
- Have your hearing and vision checked annually.
- Have your feet checked.
- Make your home safer by removing throw rugs, adding grab bars, adding brighter light bulbs to provide more lighting, use nonslip mats and keep items you use often within reach in your cabinets to avoid using a step stool.

What the Center for Disease Control and Prevention data says about falls:

- One out of five falls causes serious injury, such as a broken bone or head injury.
- Three million seniors are treated in the emergency room for falls each year.
- Over 800,000 people are hospitalized because of a fall injury, such as a fractured hip or head injury.
- More than 95% of hip fractures are caused by falling.
- Women fall more often than men and account for three-quarters of all hip fractures.

Source: CDC.gov\*

\*Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and Blue Care Network don't own or control this website.