



Fall Prevention Awareness

The first day of fall is Falls Prevention Awareness Day. Covia and our communities are working together to raise awareness about falls and preventing them.

Why Fall Prevention

While adults 65 and older are at elevated risk for falls, these are not a natural part of aging and many falls can be prevented. However, falls can pose an especially significant threat to the health and independence of older adults. Falls often result in serious injuries like a traumatic brain injury or hip fracture and are a major cause of unintentional death. Even if a fall results in no injuries, people may become afraid of falling, causing them to cut down on their everyday activities and become weaker.

What You Can Do:

Exercise for Balance and Fall Prevention:

- Join or start a falls prevention program in your community. Visit www.stopfallscalifornia.org to find programs near you
- Practice balance exercises such as Tai Chi. You can find exercises you can do anywhere at go4life.nia.nih.gov/exercise-type/balance/

Make Smart Choices:

- Request help rather than changing lightbulbs or climbing ladders or stepladders
- Take your time before standing to make sure your feet are under you and you are not light-headed
- Move closer to items, rather than reaching and overbalancing
- Don't drink alcohol to excess. As you age, alcohol may affect you differently

Talk to Your Doctor:

- Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review your medications regularly, paying special attention to opioid painkillers, tranquilizers, sedatives and antidepressants
- During your physical, be sure your doctor checks for foot pain and proper footwear
- Have your vision tested annually
- Ask your doctor or physical therapist about the right walking aid for you, such as a cane or walker, including finding the proper fit
- Ask what other changes you can make to be safer

Make Your Home Safer:

- Clear your floor. Remove clutter, pet gear, electrical cords, throw rugs and anything else that might cause you or someone else to trip
- Arrange or remove furniture so there is plenty of room for walking
- Put essential items where they are easy to reach
- Add grab bars inside and outside of your bathtub or shower and next to the toilet
- Put railings on both sides of the stairs
- Make sure there is good lighting throughout the home, particularly stairs and hallways
- Use a cane or walker if necessary

And More:

We all are aging every day, but falls do not have to be a part of that process. Understanding fall risks is the first step to staying safer. Falls prevention takes place every day. Learn more about how to stay falls free.

Other Resources:

- Centers for Disease Control: www.cdc.gov/steady/patient.html
- National Institutes of Health: www.nia.nih.gov/health/prevent-falls-and-fractures
- National Safety Council: www.nsc.org/home-safety/safety-topics/older-adult-falls
- Stop Falls California: www.stopfallscalifornia.org