

# Steps to Prevent Falls

## 1. Ask

- Ask your 65+ patients if they have fallen in the past year.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Identify & Screen

- Identify risk factors for falls through screenings.<sup>3</sup>

## 3. Refer

- Refer patients to specialist or community programs.<sup>3</sup>

## 4. Follow Up

- Follow up with patients within 30 days.<sup>3</sup>



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### References

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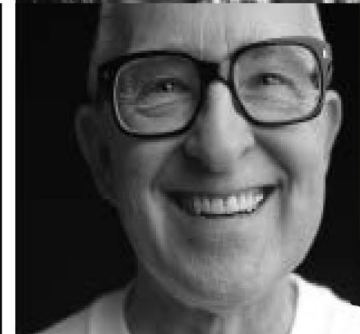


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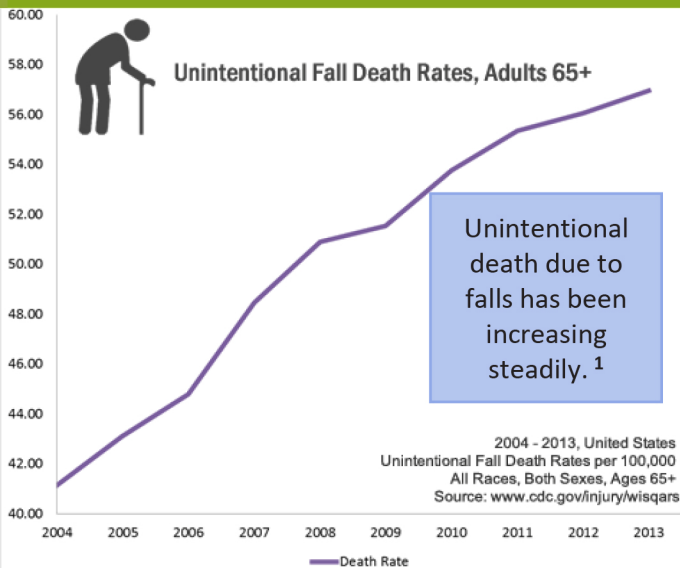
Maryland Falls Free Coalition

# FALLS PREVENTION & YOUR OLDER PATIENTS

Simple steps to prevent falls  
in your patients



## Facts & Statistics



Unintentional death due to falls has been increasing steadily.<sup>1</sup>

1

• Unintentional deaths due to falls in the 65+ age group are on the rise in the US.<sup>1</sup>

2

• In Maryland alone, there were 15,549 hospitalizations for fall injuries among older adults 65+ in 2014.<sup>2</sup>

3

• Fall related hospitalizations in older adults cost over \$250 million in Maryland during 2014.<sup>2</sup>

4

• Emergency department visits due to falls in older adults totaled 32,886, and costs over \$20 million in Maryland during 2014.<sup>2</sup>

5

• Many patients do not report falls to their healthcare providers, and few providers ask.<sup>3</sup>

## Educate Your Patients about Ways to Prevent Falls<sup>3,4</sup>

### Risk Factors

- Muscle weakness
- Poor balance
- Postural hypotension
- Dizziness
- Foot abnormalities
- Vision difficulties
- Medicines
- Home hazards
- Recent falls
- Fear of falling

### Medicines

- Review and talk to your patients about their medicines, both prescription and over the counter ones
- Fall risk increasing drugs (FRIDs)
- Calcium and vitamin D supplementation

### Sensory Input

- Refer your patients for a vision and/or hearing check up if necessary
- Peripheral neuropathy may affect strength and proprioception

### Exercise Programs

- Walking and flexibility exercises may be beneficial (see "Resources for Your Practice")

## Resources for Your Practice

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths & Injuries (STEAR) toolkit and materials available for free at [www.cdc.gov/stear/materials.html](http://www.cdc.gov/stear/materials.html) and includes:

- Algorithm for Fall Risk Assessment & Interventions
- Preventing Falls in Older Adults: Provider Pocket Guide
- Fall Risk Checklist
- Talking about Fall Prevention with Your Patients
- Stay Independent Brochure

National Council on Aging (NCOA) Fall Prevention toolkit available for free at [www.ncoa.org/healthy-aging/falls-prevention/](http://www.ncoa.org/healthy-aging/falls-prevention/) and includes:

- Fact sheets, brochures and handouts
- Webinars
- Videos
- PowerPoint presentations

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene resources available for free at [http://phpa.dhmh.maryland.gov/ohpetup/Pages/eip\\_falls.aspx](http://phpa.dhmh.maryland.gov/ohpetup/Pages/eip_falls.aspx)

Baltimore County programs for balance and fall prevention are available at <http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/aging/healtheducation/>