



Falls and the Older Adult Population

Facts and
Interventions based
on CDC
recommendations,
the CDC STEADI
program, and
evidence based
research

Presented by: Jeannie DeCray, MA
Director, Elkrige 50+ Center

Fall Statistics:

20% of falls result in serious injury such as broken bones or head injuries

Falls are the most common cause of traumatic brain injuries

> 300,000 older people are hospitalized each year for hip fractures

More than 95% of hip fractures are caused by falling, usually by falling sideways

Adapted from: CDC Home and Recreational Safety

Fall Facts

One in every four people over 65 fall each year



Of those, less than half will tell their doctor

One fall doubles the chance of falling again

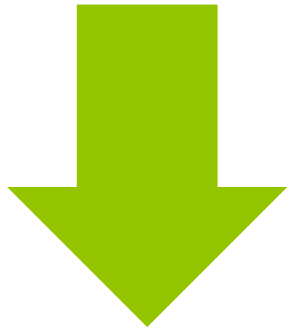


[Adapted from CDC home and recreational safety](#)

Fear of Falling: A Downward Spiral



Simple Questions???



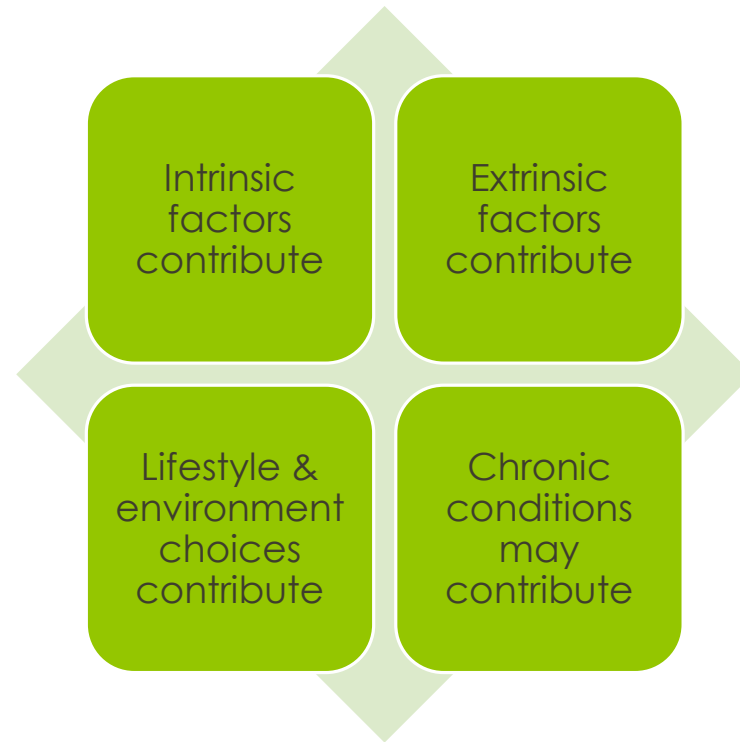
**What
causes
falls?**



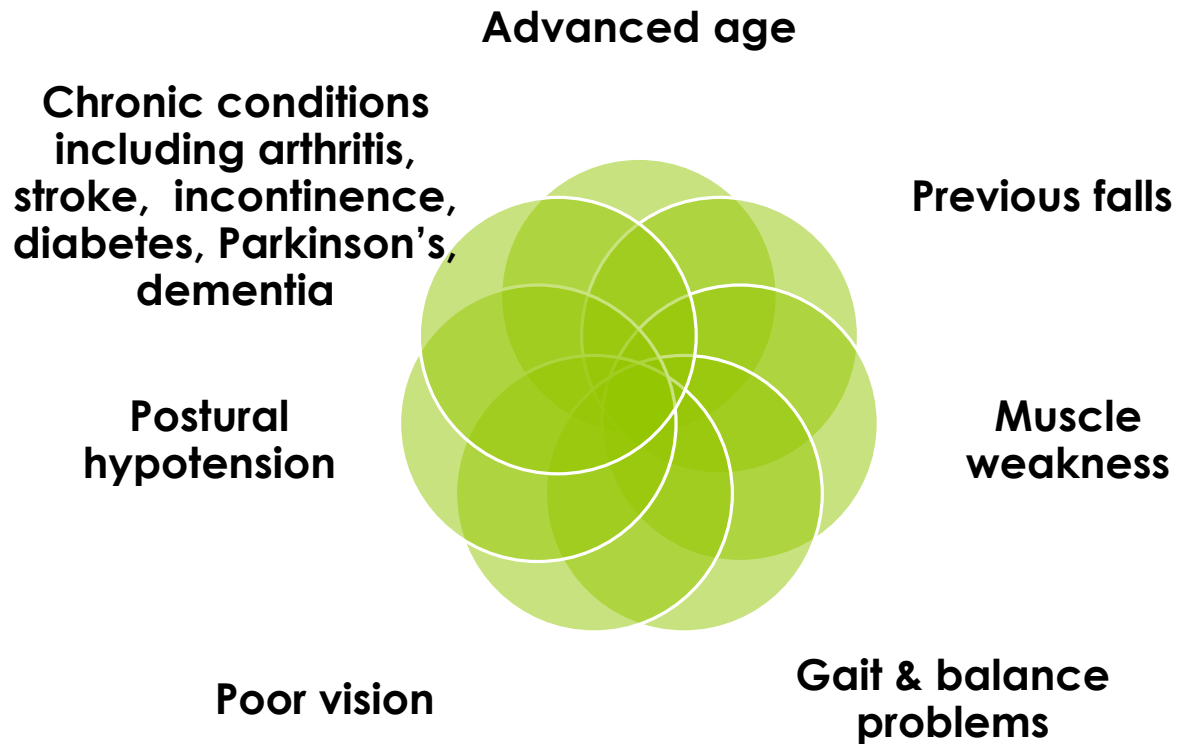
**and...How do
we prevent
them?**



Varied and Complexed Answers

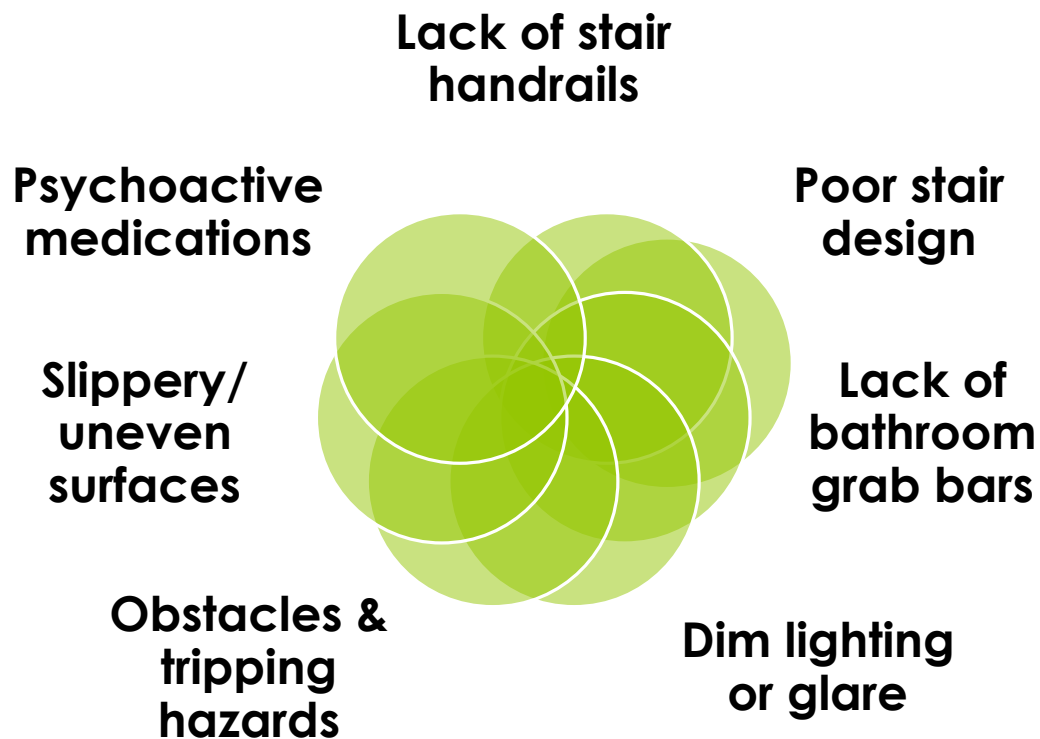


Intrinsic Factors that Contribute to Fall Risk in the Older Adult



[Adapted from CDC STEADI Fact Sheet](#)

Extrinsic Factors that Contribute to Fall Risk in the Older Adult



[Adapted from CDC STEADI Fact Sheet](#)

Additional Risk Factors from the CDC

Lower body weakness

Vitamin D deficiency

Difficulties with walking and balance

Use of medicines, such as tranquilizers, sedatives, or antidepressants. Some over-the-counter medicines can affect balance and how steady you are on your feet.

Vision problems

Foot pain or poor footwear

Home hazards or dangers such as broken or uneven steps, and throw rugs or clutter that can be tripped over.

Adapted from CDC home and recreational safety

Multifactorial Approaches to Fall Prevention Include:

Awareness

Balance & Strength Exercises

Medication Management

Vision check-ups

Supportive footwear

Assistive devices

Diet

Clutter-free environment

- **Speak up**

Talk to your doctor and pharmacist about medication, fall risks and prevention

- **Keep moving**

Start an exercise program that helps improve your strength & balance

- **Get an annual eye exam**

Replace glasses as needed

- **Make your home safer**

Get rid of clutter and tripping hazards and have good lighting in your home

Taking Action to Prevent Falls

A practical
guide from the
CDC and the
STEADI Program

Howard County Office on Aging and Independence Programs

- Stepping On
- Stepping Up Your Nutrition
- Better Balance
- Arthritis Foundation Classes (AFEP)*
- Parkinson's Foundation Classes (PFNCA)**
- Fitness Classes (Tai Chi, Strength Training, Balance Classes, Qigong, & Yoga)

*Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program

** Parkinson's Foundation of the National Capital Area

References:

Chang, J. T., Morton, S. C., Rubenstein, L. Z., Mojica, W. A., Maglione, M., Suttorp, M. J., ... Shekelle, P. G. (2004). Interventions for the prevention of falls in older adults: systematic review and meta-analysis of randomised clinical trials. *BMJ : British Medical Journal*, 328(7441), 680.

<https://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalafety/falls/adultfalls.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/steady/pdf/STEADI-FactSheet-MedsLinkedtoFalls-508.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/steady/pdf/STEADI-FactSheet-RiskFactors-508.pdf>

Contact Information

- Jeannie DeCray, MA
Director
Elkridge 50+ Center
6540 Washington Blvd.
Elkridge, MD 21075

jdecray@howardcountymd.gov

410-313-5175