



Falls Prevention

September is National Falls Prevention Month

One day in 1998, when my father was mowing his lawn, he tripped, fell onto the sidewalk and broke his hip. He was taken to the hospital where he died. He was 82.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (1):

- Falls are the leading cause of injury-related death among adults ages 65 and older, and the death rate from falls is increasing.
- Falls are the leading cause of injury for adults ages 65 years and older.
- More than 1 in 4 older adults over 65 fall every year. Nearly 50% of those over 90 fall each year. Once you fall, your chance of falling again increases.

The National Institute on Aging has several tips for avoiding falls (2).

They include:

1. Talk with your medical professional about medications that may affect your balance.
2. Remove tripping hazards like loose rugs in your house.
3. Provide adequate lighting including nightlights
4. Add falls protection aides like grab bars in the bathroom.
5. Get your vision and hearing checked regularly. Poor vision or hearing increase your chance of falling.
6. Exercise regularly to improve your balance and strength.

I would like to expand on this last point. The consequences of falling are often more severe as you age. Without adequate exercise, older people develop weaker muscles and bones, are less flexible and have poor balance. All of these factors lead to frequent falls and more severe consequences when you fall.

There is good news! By doing the right exercises you will reduce your chances of having a fall that results in an injury.

Please note, before you start a new program of exercise it is wise to check with your doctor.

According to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) there are 3 types exercises you should do to reduce your chances of a fall and the consequences if you do

fall.

They are:



Balance exercises can help prevent falls.

Learn more about Balance exercises here (**Balance and Survival**).



Strength exercises help build muscle and bone strength and can reduce the severity of a fall when it happens.

Learn more about Strength building exercises here (**Why Build Strength?**).



Flexibility exercises can help avoid falls and reduce injury when they do happen.

Learn more about Flexibility exercises here (**Train 4 Life - Flexibility**).

Explore **Train4Life.live** to learn more about exercises you can do to prevent falls and have a more active and healthy life.

1. The Centers for Disease Control and the National Institutes of Health are part of the Health and Human Services Department. All of the information provided in this article can be verified at their respective websites.
2. National Institutes of Health/National Institute on Aging (<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/falls-and-falls-prevention/falls-and-fractures-older-adults-causes-and-prevention>)

Fun Fact



Does Dancing Help Avoid Falls?

A fall can be devastating for someone over 65. But, according to research, seniors who dance have better balance, more mobility and stronger lower bodies than their non-dancing peers. They also reduce their chance of a fall by 31% (1).

May I have the next dance?

Mattle, M. et al. (2020) Association of Dance-Based Mind-Motor Activities With Falls and Physical Function Among Healthy Older Adults

- A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis. [JAMA Netw Open](#). 3(9):e2017688

For More Fun Facts click here

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