

FACT SHEET

Older Adult Falls

A growing problem that can be prevented.



IN 2018

1 in 4 older adults reported falling—
this equals about **36 million** falls.

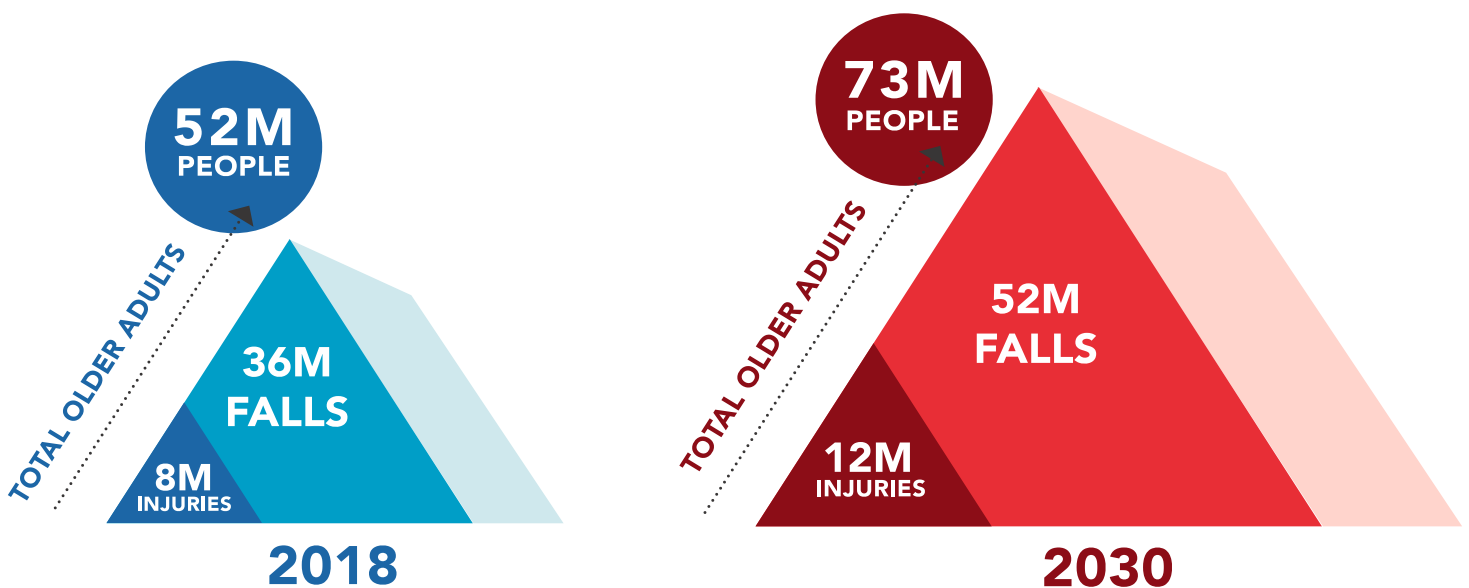
Falls can threaten the health and independence of older adults.

More than **8 million**
falls required medical attention or
limited activity for at least a day.

More than **32,000**
older adults died from falls—
that's 88 older adults every day.

Falls—and the injuries and deaths they cause—are increasing.

Over 10,000 people in the United States turn 65 every day. The number of falls and fall injuries will increase as the population of older adults grows. Death rates from falls have increased about 30% in the last decade. Healthcare costs are also on the rise. In one year alone, medical costs for falls are about \$50 billion.



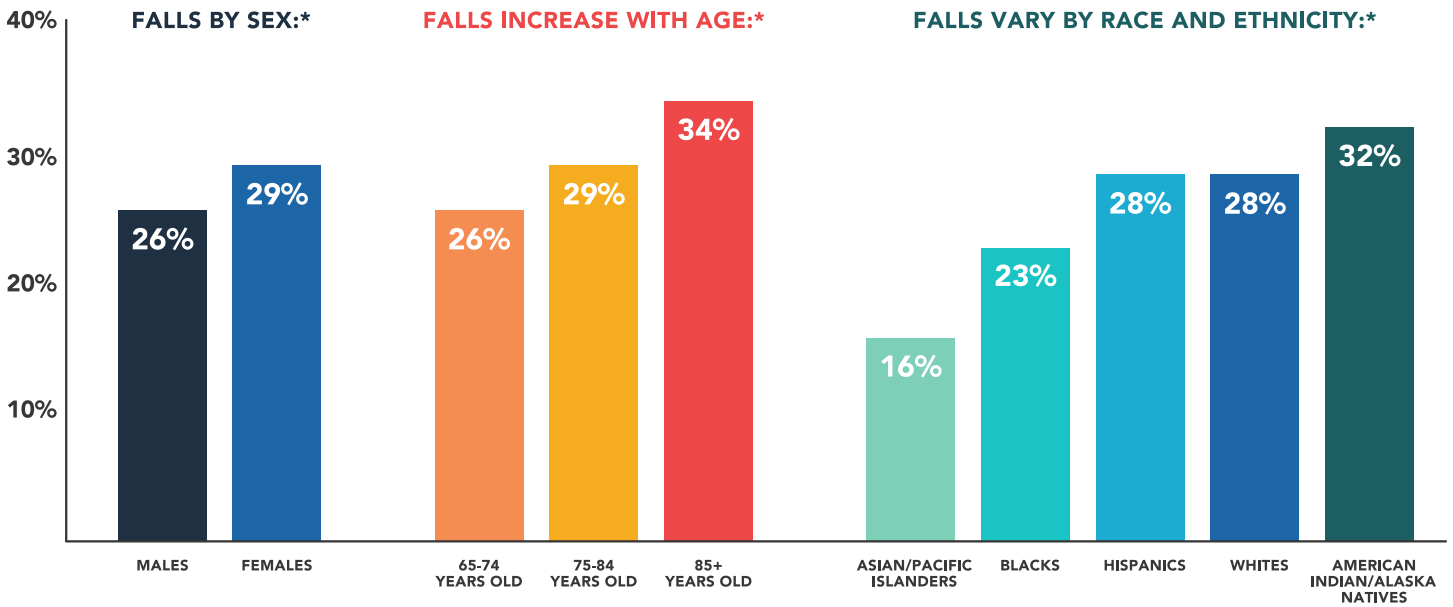
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention
National Center for Injury
Prevention and Control

STEADI Stopping Elderly Accidents,
Deaths & Injuries

2020

All adults, aged 65 and over, are at risk for a fall.

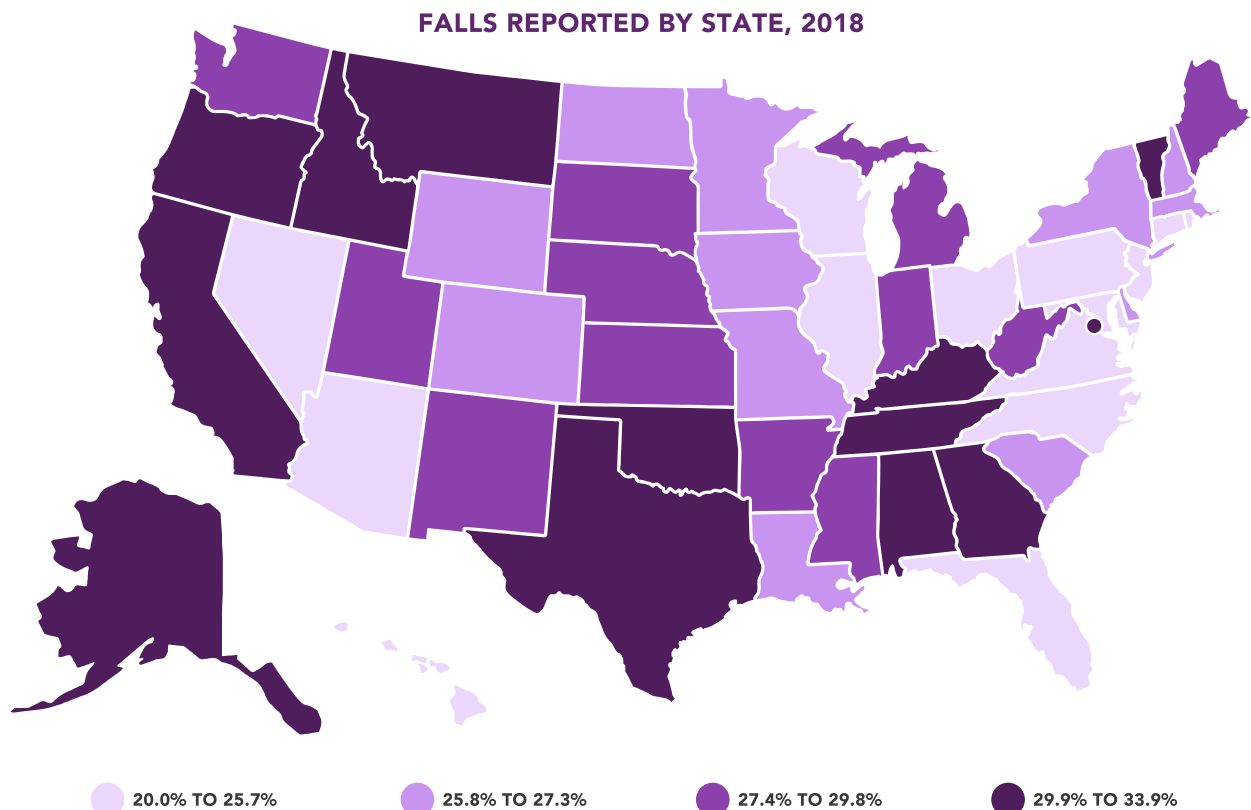
Older adults more likely to fall include females, those 85 and older, and American Indian and Alaska Natives.



*Percent of older adults who reported a fall

Falls vary by where you live.

While falls are common among people across the United States, there are some differences by state. Even in the state with the lowest percentage of falls, 1 out of 5 older adults reported a fall.



Falls are not a normal part of aging—they can be prevented.

Older adults, caregivers, and healthcare providers can work together to reduce the risk of falling and prevent devastating injuries.

Older Adults

If you're an older adult, there are simple things you can do to keep yourself from falling and stay independent longer.

Talk to your healthcare providers

- ▶ Tell your doctor if you have fallen, if you feel unsteady when standing or walking, or if you're afraid you might fall.
- ▶ Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review your medicines to see if any might increase your risk of falling.
- ▶ Ask your doctor about health conditions (like depression or osteoporosis) that can increase your risk for falling.
- ▶ Ask your doctor to check your eyes at least once a year and update lenses as needed.

Stay active

- ▶ Do exercises that make your legs stronger and improve your balance (like Tai Chi).

Make your home safer

- ▶ Get rid of trip hazards. Keep floors clutter free.
- ▶ Add grab bars in the bathroom.
- ▶ Have handrails and lights installed on all staircases.

Caregivers

As a caregiver, you can encourage your loved ones to take action to reduce their fall risk.

- ▶ Initiate a conversation with your loved one and their healthcare provider about fall risk and prevention.
- ▶ Encourage your loved one to participate in exercise programs that can help improve strength and balance (like Tai Chi).



Healthcare Providers

As a healthcare provider, you have an important role in caring for older adults and helping them prevent falls.

Use CDC's STEADI initiative in your practice

- ▶ CDC's STEADI (Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths, & Injuries) initiative offers a coordinated approach to implementing the American and British Geriatrics Societies' clinical practice guideline for fall prevention.

Less than half of older adults who fall talk to their doctor about it. Providers can proactively ask about falls.

STEADI consists of three core elements:

STEP 1:



Screen all patients age 65+ for fall risk.

STEP 2:



Assess a patient's modifiable risk factors and fall history.

STEP 3:



Intervene to reduce identified risk using effective strategies.



STEADI in practice



CDC funded health departments and health systems to integrate STEADI into their clinical practice.



Using STEADI led to positive practice changes, such as screening more older adults for fall risk, and meaningful outcomes such as lower hospitalizations due to falls.