Blue Cross Blue Shield Blue Care Network of Michigan

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2026 Fall Prevention Toolkit

& Social Media Messaging

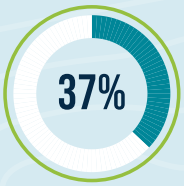
Why Fall Prevention Matters

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan is committed to improving the health and well-being of Michiganians, which includes helping older adults prevent falls. According to the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**, **more than 1 in 4** older adults fall each year, but less than half tell their doctor. The outcomes can be life-altering, leading to serious injuries, a loss of independence and even death.

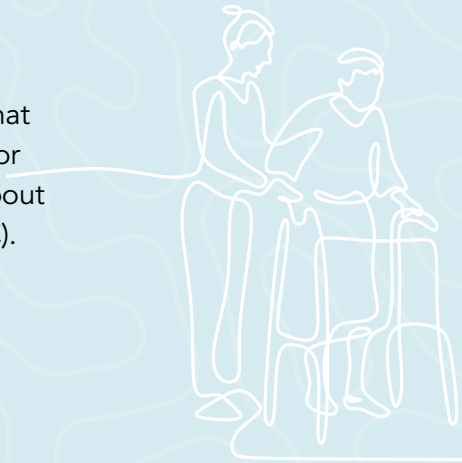
Falls are not only a major health risk but also place a substantial financial strain on the healthcare system. The **National Council on Aging (NCOA)** reports that in 2020, falls among older adults cost approximately **$80 billion**—a figure projected to rise to $101 billion by 2030.

Prioritizing fall prevention helps reduce healthcare costs and improve the quality of life for older adults. Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan created this toolkit to educate and raise awareness about fall risk factors and prevention strategies, empowering seniors and their loved ones to take proactive steps to stay safe.

Each year, **37 million** people aged 65 and older experience a fall (CDC).



About **37% of falls** cause injuries that need medical care or limit activity for at least one day. This adds up to about nine million injuries each year (CDC).



Falls cause **88% of emergency visits and hospital stays** for hip fractures. They also cause 83% of deaths related to hip fractures (CDC).

Understanding Fall Risks

Consequences of Falls

- **Physical:** Injuries such as hip fractures, broken bones or head injuries
- **Functional:** Loss of independence & quality of life
- **Psychological:** Fear of falling, depression & social isolation
- **Healthcare utilization:** Hospitalizations, rehab & follow-up care
- **Caregiver burden:** Increased emotional, physical & financial strain on family members & caregivers

Fall Risk Factors

- Taking medications such as sedatives or antihypertensives
- Vision & hearing impairment
- Postural hypotension, a sudden drop in blood pressure when standing up
- Chronic diseases such as arthritis, Parkinson's & diabetes
- Environmental hazards in the home, like clutter, pets, poor lighting, loose carpets, slippery floors, low toilets & loose cords
- Improper footwear & use of mobility aids

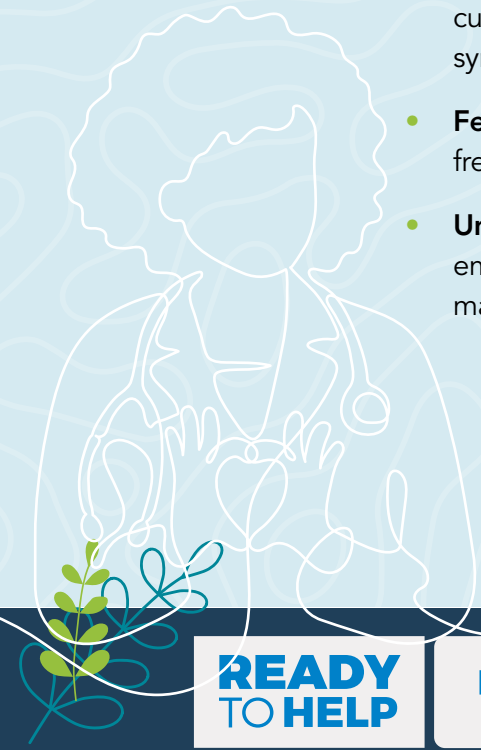
Reducing Your Risk: Steps to Stay Safe

Prevention Strategies

- Review your prescribed or over-the-counter medications and supplements with your doctor or pharmacist
- Schedule annual wellness visits with your primary care provider (PCP)
  - Your PCP can track changes and help with a plan to prevent falls
- Schedule annual vision & hearing checks
- Stay physically active with strength & balance programs, walking, Tai Chi, yoga or dancing
- Make home safety modifications such as:
  - Adding grab/high-friction bars, lighting, proper footwear & tape to distinguish step heights
  - Removing clutter & loose rugs
- Obtain assistive devices like a cane or walker
- Use technology aids like smart watches or emergency response systems to detect falls
- Talk to your family members to ask for their help in taking simple steps to stay safe

When to Talk to a Provider

- **After a fall:** Contact your provider promptly to assess any injury and identify underlying causes
- **Starting or reviewing medications:** Before starting new medications, review your current medications and potential side effects with your provider, and discuss any symptoms you're experiencing so they can assess how this may impact your fall risk
- **Feeling dizzy/unsteady:** Reach out to your provider if dizziness or unsteadiness is frequent or worsening
- **Unsure or embarrassed about fall risk:** Falling is common as we age —don't let embarrassment stop you from bringing up concerns with your provider so you can make a plan together



Spread the Word on Social Media

Here are five messages to raise awareness of fall prevention among older adults.

- You can copy and paste the messaging, including the article link, into your social media platforms.
- Download the related image by double-clicking and then attach it to the post.
- Tag **@Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan** on Facebook and LinkedIn, **@BCBSM** on X/Twitter, **@bcbsmi** on TikTok and **@bcbsmichigan** on Instagram.

Topic: Physical activity

Staying active is one of the best ways to prevent falls as we age. Even simple activities like daily walks can boost strength, balance and flexibility—key factors in staying independent and reducing injury risk.

Learn more about balance exercises that can help lower the risk of falling from our simple guide in A Healthier Michigan, @Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan's health and wellness blog:

https://www.ahealthiermichigan.org/stories/health-and-wellness/balance-exercises-for-falls-prevention?utm_source=2026-fall-prevention-toolkit-email&utm_medium=2026-fall-prevention-toolkit-email&utm_campaign=2026-fall-prevention-toolkit&utm_id=2026-fall-prevention-toolkit

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Topic: Home safety

Did you know that up to half of falls among older adults are caused by hazards at home? Everyday items like clutter, loose rugs, poor lighting and slippery floors can increase your risk.

The good news: small changes can make a big difference.

- Clear walkways and remove tripping hazards
- Improve lighting in high-traffic areas
- Secure rugs and add grab bars where needed

Share these simple tips to help older adults stay safe and independent at home!

Double-click image to download.

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Topic: Medications

Did you know that some medications can increase your risk of falling? Side effects like dizziness, drowsiness, or low blood pressure can make it harder to stay steady on your feet.

Talk with your doctor or pharmacist about all the medicines you take, including prescriptions, over-the-counter medications and supplements. A quick review could help prevent a fall and keep you safer at home.

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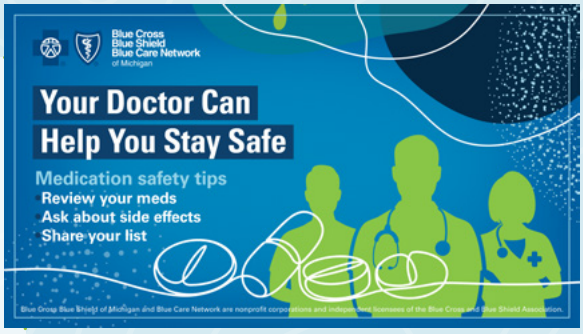

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Topic: Technology

Smart tech is making it easier and safer for seniors to live independently.

Wearables with fall detection, GPS and heart rate tracking help seniors get help fast and keep families in the loop.

Curious about how tech can help you or a loved one age safely? Read more in this @Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan MI Blue Daily blog by Dr. Peter Graham, Blue Care Network's chief medical officer:

https://www.bcbsm.mibluedaily.com/stories/prevention/smart-tech-and-safe-aging-tips-to-help-your-loved-ones-live-alone-safely-and-for-longer?utm_source=2026-fall-prevention-toolkit-email&utm_medium=2026-fall-prevention-toolkit-email&utm_campaign=2026-fall-prevention-toolkit&utm_id=2026-fall-prevention-toolkit

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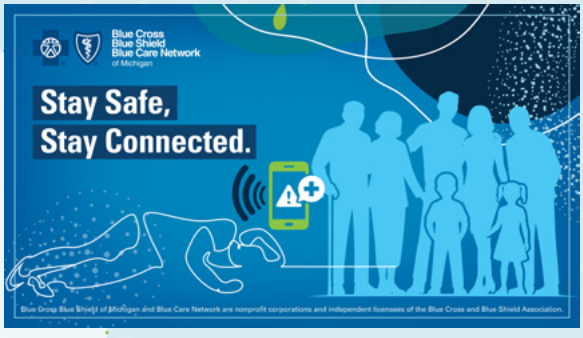

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Topic: Caregivers

A fall can impact more than just the person who falls — it can also place a heavy emotional and physical burden on caregivers.

Preventing falls is a team effort. Start an open conversation with your loved one to understand their risks and work together on a plan to stay safe at home.

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Helpful Resources

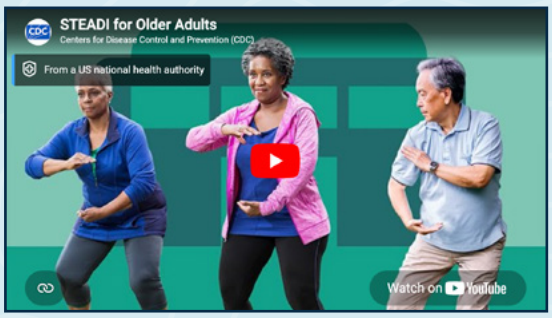
Healthy Aging and Independence

Blue Cross Virtual Well-Being Senior Series

MIBlueDaily.com

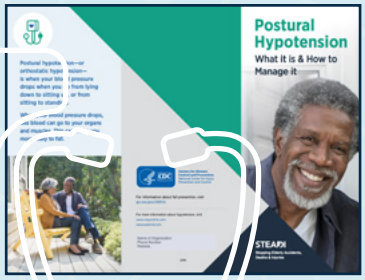
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- Facts About Falls
- STEADI – Older Adult Fall Prevention



- Check for Safety – A Home Fall Prevention Checklist for Older Adults
- Postural Hypotension – What is it & How to Manage it
- Stay Independent – Learn more about fall prevention

National Council on Aging | Falls Free Checkup



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