Fall-Related TBIs Among Older Adults

CDC Perspective

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Falls: A Public Health Concern

- The leading cause of injury deaths among older adults
- 25,000 older adults die each year from a fall – 1 every 20 minutes
  - Half of these fatal falls are caused by a TBI
- $34 billion is spent on direct medical costs related to falls
- TBIs and deaths caused by falls can be prevented
Falls are the leading cause of TBI.
Modifiable Risk Factors

**Biological**
- Leg weakness
- Mobility problems
- Problems w balance
- Poor vision

**Environmental**
- Clutter & tripping hazards
- No stair railings or grab bars
- Poor lighting

**Behavioral**
- Psychoactive meds
- 4+ medications
- Risky behaviors
- Inactivity
Talking to a Provider and Quality of Life

- Fear of falling
  - Reduced mobility
  - Fewer social interactions with friends and family
  - Decreased physical fitness
- Less than 50% talk to their healthcare provider about their fall
- Modifiable risk factors for falls can be addressed by a healthcare provider
CDC’s Strategies to Address Older Adult Falls
CDC Strategic Directions

Improve health security at home and around the world

Better prevent the leading causes of illness, injury, disability, and death

Strengthen public health & health care collaboration
About **25,000** older adults die each year from a fall. That's one person every 20 minutes.

Direct medical costs for falls amount to about **$34 billion each year**.

**Using 3 steps** in CDC's STEADI initiative can help you protect your patients age **65 and older** from falls — **SAVING LIVES AND COSTS**.

1. **ASK**
   Your patients if they have fallen in the last year, feel unsteady, or worry about falling.

2. **REVIEW**
   Your patient's medications & stop, switch, or reduce the dose of prescriptions that increase the risk for falls.

3. **RECOMMEND**
   Vitamin D supplements for your patients of at least 800 IU/day with calcium.

**CDC's STEADI** initiative can help your older patients stay **healthy, active, and independent** longer.

Learn more: [www.cdc.gov/injury/STEADI](http://www.cdc.gov/injury/STEADI)

**STEADI** Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths & Injuries
Are You Asking Older Adult Patients the Right Questions?

- Have you fallen in the past year?
- Do you feel unsteady when standing or walking?
- Do you worry about falling?

FREE Video: www.CDC.gov/steady
Two Important Clinical Interventions

Vitamin D

Medication Review
Recent and Upcoming CDC Releases

Online continuing education courses to incorporate STEADI in clinical practice

Clinical decision support modules for Electronic Health Records
PREVENTING FALLS: A Guide to Implementing Effective Community-Based Fall Prevention Programs
For every 5,000 health care providers who adopt STEADI, over a 5-year period as many as:

- 6 million more patients could be screened,
- 1 million more falls could be prevented; and
- $3.5 billion more in direct medical costs could be saved.
Better Data are Needed

- **Current Sources of Data**
  - Hospitalizations
  - TBI-related ED visits
  - Death certificate data

- **Gaps in Surveillance**
  - TBI-related disability estimates
  - State-specific estimates

- **Leveraging Other TBI Data Collection**
Learn more about older adult fall prevention and TBI:
www.cdc.gov/Injury/