

Where Do Senior Citizens Fall:

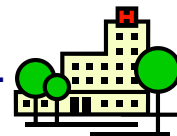


Fall, Injury Prevention for Seniors

Falls can occur anytime, anyplace, and to anyone while doing everyday activities such as climbing stairs or getting out of a bathtub or shower. As we age the risk of falls and related injuries increases drastically. In fact after the age of 65, the risk of a fall related hip fracture doubles every five years.

Familiarity of surroundings or repetition of tasks do very little to reduce falls. Most falls occur while performing everyday tasks and activities of daily living (ADL's). Falls occur in the following environments:

- **59.0percent: at home (53.2% in their own, 5.8% in another home, like a family home)**
- **25.9percent: in the community (1.7% health services, 8.9% retail, 2.4 Sports/rec. 8.1% roads, sidewalks, 4.8% other)**
- **15.1percent: in institutions, such as nursing homes or hospitals.**



Most fractures are a result of a fall in a home, usually related to everyday activities such as walking on stairs, going to the bathroom or working in the kitchen. About 25 percent of all falls are the result of hazards such as slippery or wet surfaces, poor lighting, inadequate footwear and cluttered pathways.

Greatest Hazard areas in the Home:

- Bathroom 45% of all falls
- Kitchen- 20% of all falls
- Bedroom- 10% of all falls
- To and From above locations- 15% of all falls
- Exterior of the home (entry area)- 5% of all falls
- Other areas in the home- 5% of all falls

According to the Center for Disease Control, each year, more than 734,000 people over 65 are treated in hospital emergency rooms for injuries associated with stairs, bathtubs, furniture, carpeting and other products seniors live with and use every day. The most mundane objects in the home that have been present for years can cause falls. In fact 30,000 seniors each year fall while standing on chairs; 168,000 seniors trip on rugs or carpet.

Household Objects / Issues that present an overt fall hazard:

- Floor Coverings - unsecured area rugs, loose runners, slippery mats
- Bathroom appliances – tub, shower, toilet
- Uneven surfaces – steps, risers, stairs
- Obstructions – chair legs, unsteady furniture, low tables, extension cords
- Clutter - debris, magazines, trash
- Environmental Issues- Poor or inadequate lighting, water or substances on the floor creating a slip hazard