

Did you know that one out of three people 65 and older falls each year?

And that falls are the number one cause of traumatic brain injury in Iowa and the U.S.?

To prevent falls:

- Begin an exercise program to improve your leg strength & balance.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review your medications.
- Get your vision & hearing checked annually; update your eyeglasses.
- Make your home safer by:
 - ▶ Removing clutter & tripping hazards (throw rugs, papers, books, etc.)
 - ▶ Putting railings on stairs & adding grab bars in the bathroom.
 - ▶ Having good lighting, especially on stairs.

**For resources,
services & support
contact:**

LifeLong Links

**1-866-468-7887
www.lifelonglinks.org**

Brain Injury Alliance of Iowa

**1-855-444-6443
www.biaia.org**

Iowa Brain Injury Services Program

Iowa Department of Public Health
Lucas Building
312 12th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319

Brain Injury Program Manager
515-281-8465
www.idph.state.ia.us/ACBI/

**Stay Independent;
Assess Your Fall Risk**



Check your risk for falling

Circle “Yes” or “No” for each statement below.

Why it matters:

Yes (2) **No (0)** I have fallen in the past. People who have fallen once are likely to fall again.

Yes (2) **No (0)** I use or have been advised to use a cane or walker to get around safely. People who have been advised to use a cane or walker may already be more likely to fall.

Yes (1) **No (0)** Sometimes I feel unsteady when I am walking. Unsteadiness or needing support while walking are signs of poor balance.

Yes (1) **No (0)** I steady myself by holding onto furniture when walking at home. This is also a sign of poor balance.

Yes (1) **No (0)** I am worried about falling. People who are worried about falling are more likely to fall.

Yes (1) **No (0)** I need to push with my hands to stand up from a chair. This is a sign of weak leg muscles, a major reason for falling.

Yes (1) **No (0)** I have some trouble stepping up onto a curb. This is also a sign of weak leg muscles.

Yes (1) **No (0)** I often have to rush to the toilet. Rushing to the bathroom, especially at night, increases your chance of falling.

Yes (1) **No (0)** I have lost some feeling in my feet. Numbness in your feet can cause stumbles and lead to falls.

Yes (1) **No (0)** I take medicine that sometimes makes me feel light-headed or more tired than usual. Side effects from medicines can sometimes increase your chance of falling.

Yes (1) **No (0)** I take medicine to help me sleep or improve my mood. These medicines can sometimes increase your chance of falling.

Yes (1) **No (0)** I often feel sad or depressed. Symptoms of depression, such as not feeling well or feeling slowed down, are linked to falls.

TOTAL _____ Add up the number of points for each “yes” answer.

If you scored 4 points or more, you may be at risk for falling. Discuss this brochure with your doctor.

This brochure was adapted from resources available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. For more information, please visit www.cdc.gov/injury or www.stopfalls.org.