



Falls in seniors

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Falls are the No. 1 reason for injury-related death, hospitalization and emergency department visits for older adults in Canada. Falls among older adults cost \$5.6 billion in 2018 – nearly 20 per cent of the total cost of injury in Canada.

Our bodies naturally change with age and these changes affect the way we feel, move, and behave. A fall can have a devastating and lasting impact on a person, resulting in injury, chronic pain and a reduced quality of life. Even without an injury, a fall can cause an older adult to lose confidence and reduce their activities. The good news is that there are actions you can take to prevent falls.

Check out our resources section below to find information on how to assess risk, how to prevent a fall, how to get up safely after a fall, falls and their connection to various issues such as vision, medication, chronic diseases, cognitive impairment and more.

Key strategies to prevent falls

These are the most effective steps you can take to prevent a fall, as assessed by the Public Health Agency of Canada and Finding Balance, a program for older adults and caregivers created by the Injury Prevention Centre at the University of Alberta.

- Exercise: challenge your balance and build strength.
- Get enough sleep.
- Take your time: don't rush when walking or getting up.

- Balance your body through good nutrition and hydration.
- Get your sight and hearing checked regularly.
- Manage your medications and review them

regularly with your pharmacist or doctor as some may make you prone to dizziness and falling.

- Wear well-fitting, sturdy shoes.
- Consider using a cane or other mobility device if needed.
- Maintain proper use of eyeglasses and hearing aids.



In your home

- Make sure you have proper lighting in hallways, stairs and walkways, as well as in the bedroom and bathroom.

- Keep stairs free of clutter and exterior stairs and walkways free of clutter, ice or snow.
- Install hand rails along stairs and safety grab bars in the bathroom.
- Check your home for slipping and tripping hazards, and use non-slip mats or rugs.
- Ensure regularly used items are within reach.

Canada's aging population



The proportion of Canadians aged 65 or older is projected to increase from 17.5% in 2019 to between 21.4% and 29.5% by 2068.

— Source: Statistics Canada

Fall prevention is critical as our Canadian population ages; without successful prevention strategies, we face a difficult

and pressing issue of providing treatment and facilities to care for those who have been injured due to a fall.



RESOURCES

COST OF FALLS

Cost of injury – Falls in seniors infographic

PDF/UA



#FALLPREVENTIONCANADA CAMPAIGN

Parachute partnered with Brittlestar, “The Internet’s Favourite Dad”, to produce a series of short videos featuring Brittlestar and his real-life mom having humorous conversations to convince her to exercise and take other actions that will prevent falls. The videos tell people how to find Parachute’s fall-prevention resources developed as part of our #FallPreventionCanada campaign. This campaign won the Gold award for best short video at the 2022 International Safety Media Awards.

Brittlestar and his mom: Explaining fall prevention

VIDEO

Brittlestar and his mom: Fall prevention exercises are easy (for some people)










VIDEO

Brittlestar and his mom: Stand for clear floors (or you’ll fall for anything)

VIDEO




FALL PREVENTION – GENERAL

The resources below will help you understand your fall risk and proven strategies to prevent falls.



Move, Improve, Remove Posters	LINK 	+
Am I at risk for a fall? – Finding Balance Alberta	LINK 	+
Avoid falls with three simple tips – Mc Master Optimal Aging	LINK 	+
Bruno and Alice: A Love Story in Twelve Parts About Seniors and Safety	LINK 	+
Fall Prevention – Vancouver Coastal Health	LINK 	+
Falls: Common, Costly and Preventable (webinar)	LINK 	+
Gait and Balance in Older Adults: Slips, Trips and Falls (webinar)	LINK 	+
How to lower your fall risk – Public Health Agency of Canada	LINK 	+
How can I prevent a fall? – Finding Balance Alberta	LINK 	+

Preventing Falls at Home	LINK 	+
Preventing Falls in Older Adults (Saskatchewan Health Authority)	LINK 	+
You CAN prevent falls – Public Health Agency of Canada	PDF 	+
Seniors' Falls in Canada	LINK 	+
Staying Independent Checklist	LINK 	+

FOOTWEAR

Better Winter Footwear Handout	LINK 	+
CARP Ottawa: Winter footwear and staying active in winter	VIDEO 	+
Rate my Treads	LINK 	+

FOR CAREGIVERS

Carers Canada	LINK 	+
Ontario Caregiver Organization	LINK 	+

Tips for caregivers to help seniors stay active during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond

[PDF/UA](#)

HOME MODIFICATIONS AND SAFETY

The guides below will help you ensure your home is as safe as possible and free from fall hazards.

CARP Ottawa: How to make stairs safer for everyone

[VIDEO](#)

CARP Ottawa: Make your bathroom safer

[VIDEO](#)

Maintaining Senior's Independence Through Home Adaptations

[LINK](#)

Preventing Falls on Stairs

[LINK](#)

Room-by-room guide to eliminate causes of falls – Philips Lifeline

[LINK](#)

Safer Bathrooms, Safer Bathing

[PDF](#)












The Safe Living Guide – A Guide to Home Safety for Seniors

[LINK](#)

12 Steps to stair safety at home – Public Health Agency of Canada

[LINK](#)

INDIVIDUAL FACTORS

Balance exercises for people living with Parkinson's disease – Video Series	VIDEO 	+
Balance exercises for people living with Parkinson's disease – Tip Sheet	PDF 	+
BodyBreak and Avoiding Frailty	LINK 	+
BodyBreak and Avoiding Frailty – Videos	VIDEO 	+
Canadian Frailty Network	LINK 	+
Fall Prevention: How Your Optometrist Can Help	LINK 	+
Find an occupational therapist – Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists	LINK 	+
Osteoarthritis and Exercise – HealthHQ	LINK 	+
People living with arthritis	LINK 	+
Physical activity for people living with osteoporosis	LINK 	+
Preventing Falls: A Guide for People Living With Parkinson's	PDF 	+

Preventing vision-related falls in seniors

LINK 

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MEDICATION MANAGEMENT

Canadian Deprescribing Network –
Medications and Falls

LINK 

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ORGANIZATIONS

Finding Balance Alberta

LINK 

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Finding Balance BC

LINK 

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Finding Balance New Brunswick

LINK 

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Finding Balance Newfoundland and
Labrador: Western Health Region

LINK 

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Portal for tools and resources – Canadian
Patient Safety Institute

LINK 











STAYING ACTIVE AND HEALTHY EATING

The resources below provide helpful information on how to safely add more movement into your daily life, whether inside or outside of the home.

Healthy Living Workshop (Active Aging
Canada)






LINK 

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Adding movement to your at-home routine	PDF/UA 	+
Canada's Food Guide – Healthy Eating for Seniors	LINK 	+
Canadian Malnutrition Task Force	LINK 	+
COVID-19 and Nutrition	PDF 	+
Home Activity Program – Vancouver Coastal Health	LINK 	+
Movement Snacks	VIDEO 	+
Physical activity for older adults	LINK 	+
Physical Activity Toolkit – ParticipACTION	PDF 	+
Physical Activity Tips for Older Adults (65 years and older) – Government of Canada	LINK 	+
Too Fit to Fracture	PDF 	+

WHAT TO DO AFTER A FALL

These resources let you know what to do if you or a loved one suffers a fall.

How to safely help someone to get up – Poster	LINK 	+
How to safely help someone to get up – Video	VIDEO 	+
If I fall, what do I do? – Finding Balance Alberta	LINK 	+
If you fall or witness a fall, do you know what to do? – Public Health Agency of Canada	LINK 	+
Virtual Care Guide for Patients	LINK 	+



INJURY TOPICS

Falls in children

[\[https://](#)

[topic/f](#)

[preven](#)

[for-](#)

[childre](#)



MEDIA


Sophia Loren was hospitalized after a fall. Why is falling so dangerous for seniors?

[LINK](#) 

 Yahoo News — September 25, 2023

Why are these scientists teaching seniors how to fall

[LINK](#) 

 Toronto Star — March 24, 2023

How You Can Reduce the Risk of Falls as an Older Adult

LINK 

 www.healthinsight.ca — June 13, 2022

Take action to prevent falls – Active aging Canada

LINK 

 www.activeagingcanada.ca — November 10, 2021

Staying safe in your castle

LINK 

 Sagelink.ca — February 15, 2021

Falls are the leading cause of hospital visits involving seniors

LINK 

 CTV News — July 11, 2019

Public Health Agency of Canada supports fall prevention among Canadian seniors

LINK 

 Public Health Agency of Canada — February 12, 2019
