

Hot Days Cool Moves

Prevent Falls,
Prevent Burns



The Impact of Falls

Unintentional **falls** are a **leading cause** of injury-related **mortality** among **Arizona** residents **65 years** and older.

Source: azstopfalls.org (2022)

Many of these falls are **preventable**.
Through awareness prevention, a large percentage of these incidents can be avoided.

Source: fallpreventionfoundation.org

What Puts Older Adults at **Risk** of Falling?

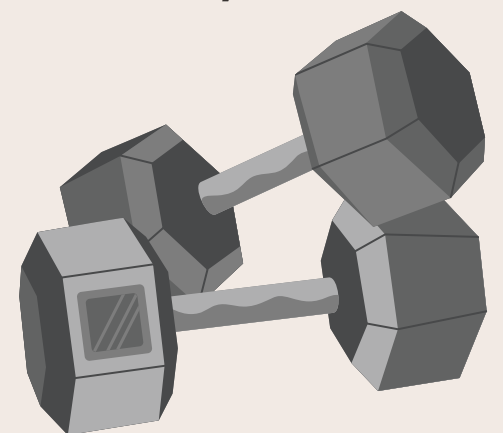
Check out some of the
most common factors:



Lack of Physical Activity



Without regular exercise, **muscles** - especially in the legs and core - along with **cardiovascular health** and **joint flexibility**, can **weaken or decline**, making it harder to maintain balance and recover from a stumble.



Balance and Gait 2

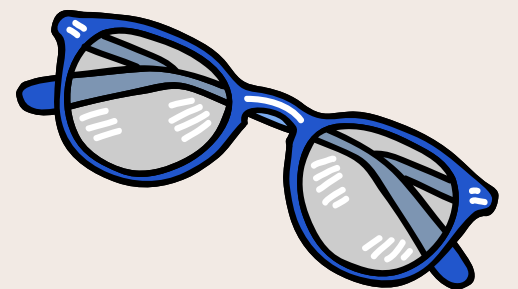
As people age, many experience a **decline in coordination, flexibility, and balance** - often due to inactivity, which increases the risk of falling.

Additionally, **foot pain** or **improper footwear** can also negatively impact balance.



Vision Loss 3

As the eye ages, less light reaches the retina, making it more difficult to see **contrasting edges, obstacles, and tripping hazards.**



Older adults with **vision loss** are nearly **twice as likely** to experience **falls** compared to those without visual impairments.

Hearing Loss 4

People with **hearing loss** are nearly **three times** as likely to **fall** compared to those with normal hearing.

Wearing a hearing aid **reduces** the risk of falling by **50%**.





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Medications

Some prescriptions and over-the-counter medications can cause **dizziness, dehydration, or interactions** with each other that can lead to a **fall**.

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 Valleywise Health



Medications

That Can Lead to Falls

- Anti-anxiety drugs such as diazepam (Valium) and lorazepam (Ativan)
- Diphenhydramine (Benadryl) over the counter antihistamines
- Psychoactive medications, including anticonvulsants, antidepressants, antipsychotics, benzodiazepines, opioids, and sedatives / hypnotics
- Muscle relaxants
- Medications for blood pressure
- Anticholinergics, including medications to treat urinary incontinence, overactive bladder, or COPD

Chronic 6 Conditions

More than **80%** of older adults live with at least one chronic condition, such as **diabetes, stroke, arthritis, or other neurological and musculoskeletal concerns.**

These conditions often **increase the risk of falling** by contributing to **reduced sensation, physical function, inactivity, and depression** - making injury more likely.



Don't Let a Fall Lead to a Burn

In extreme **Arizona temperatures**, the **risk of falling rises**. Older adults who **fall outdoors** in the summer are at increased risk for **contact burns, dehydration, heatstroke, and delayed emergency response** - especially if they're unable to get up on their own.

Be proactive, prepared, and aware!

Check out these
fall prevention tips:



Prevention Tips

- Get your hearing and vision checked **every year**.
- Keep an **up-to-date list** of all medications.
- **Review side effects** with your doctor or pharmacist - some medications can affect balance.
- Wear **supportive, slip-resistant shoes** with low, wide heels.
- Use **assistive mobility devices** if needed.
- Stay **physically active** to maintain strength, balance, and flexibility.
- Check your **nutrition** regularly with your provider to address any deficiencies.
- If you have a **history of falls**, keep a **towel** or **blanket** in your car to help reposition yourself if you happen to fall, which can prevent contact burns.

Don't Wait to Seek Care

- Even small burns can be **deeper than they appear**. Delaying care can lead to **serious complications and damage**.
- Seek medical care **immediately** if you, or someone you know, has **suffered burns** from hot pavement or other surfaces.
- When in doubt or if you think a life is in danger, **call 911**.



Burn injury care you can trust.

*The Diane & Bruce Halle Arizona
Burn Center - Valleywise Health*

Burn Center: 602-344-5726

If you are experiencing a medical emergency, call **911**.