

FYI

Fatal falls among seniors age 65 and older have risen 112 percent since 1999. More than 21,600 deaths in 2010 were attributed to falls among this age group, accounting for eight out of every 10 fatal falls in the United States. But injury from falls is just one of the safety issues being stressed this month by the National Safety Council during National Safety Month and several of them are critical to senior citizens.



Unintentional injuries are the 5th leading cause of death, exceeded only by heart disease, cancer, stroke and chronic lower respiratory diseases, according to Injury Facts 2014 edition, a publication of the National Safety Council.

But the biggest danger for seniors is falling. Approximately 27,800 deaths in 2012 can be attributed to falls, with seven out of ten of these deaths affecting adults over 74 years of age.

"For older adults, falls and the resulting injuries can diminish their ability to lead active, independent lives," said Deborah Hersman, NSC president and CEO.

"Identifying potential fall hazards and making changes to improve your strength, balance and vision can help reduce your risk of a fall at any age."

The National Safety Council is calling on Americans to recognize during National Safety Month the potential fall risks for themselves and the older people in their lives.

These tips can help prevent falls:

- Stay active and exercise to increase core strength and balance
- Review medications and be aware of those with side effects that can make you drowsy or lightheaded
- Get your vision checked, as poor vision can lead to falls
- Remove tripping hazards (papers, books, clothes, shoes) from stairs and places you walk
- Clean up all spills immediately and keep the floor dry
- Keep frequently used items in cabinets you can reach easily without using a step stool
- Install grab bars next to your toilet and in your tub/shower
- Use non-slip mats in the bathtub and on shower floors
- Improve lighting in your home, including using a nightlight
- Install handrails and lights on all staircases
- Wear shoes with good support that have non-slip soles