

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

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](http://www.lifelonglinks.org)

### Brain Injury Alliance of Iowa

1-855-444-6443  
[www.biaia.org](http://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/](http://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 lightheaded 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](http://www.cdc.gov/injury) or [www.stopfalls.org](http://www.stopfalls.org).*