

# Falls and the Fear of Falling

One of the primary goals of Senior Village at SaddleBrooke is helping our members maintain their independence so that they can stay in their homes for as long as possible. When we visit prospective members, we sometimes see potential hazards in their homes that could put their safety at risk. Loose area rugs and exposed electrical cords on the floor can turn into major obstacles that can cause a fall. At our age, healing from broken bones can take many months, and the aches will continue to nag us. This article is meant both to alert you to the dangers and consequences of falling as well as to help you avoid those accidents.

Regardless of your overall health, falls among older people are a huge problem and are, in fact, the leading cause of death in seniors. More than one in three adults 65 and older will fall in a given year, according to the Centers for Disease Control, and more than two-thirds will fall again within six months. Falls threaten our safety and independence and generate enormous economic and personal costs.

It's no wonder when you ask seniors, "What are your biggest fears?", many will say a *Fear of Falling*. While some have already fallen, others have witnessed a friend or family member suffer painful and sometimes life-threatening consequences of a fall. This *Fear of Falling* has its own serious consequence, as the *fear* may restrict activities and social engagements which, in turn, can create physical decline, social isolation, and feelings of helplessness ...an unfortunate ongoing circle where the *fear* itself can increase risk for falls!

The good news is many falls are preventable. Through practical lifestyle adjustments, you can make your home "fall proof". Eliminate loose cords, scatter rugs and obstacles that may cause you to trip (including that cute little furry thing that you love). Install grab bars in showers and night lights in hallways and bathrooms. Wear non slip soles, have your eyes checked, and be aware of medication side effects like dizziness or sleepiness. We all need to be reminded to look around our homes and make them as safe as possible.

And finally, don't even think about climbing up that ladder to change a light bulb or the smoke alarm batteries. Just call the Senior Village at SaddleBrooke at 520-314-1042, become a member, and one of our dedicated volunteers will come out and do it for you. Remember, at the Senior Village .... We are *Neighbors helping Neighbors!* Check us out at: [seniorvillageatsaddlebrooke.org](http://seniorvillageatsaddlebrooke.org).