

# FALL PREVENTION CLASS



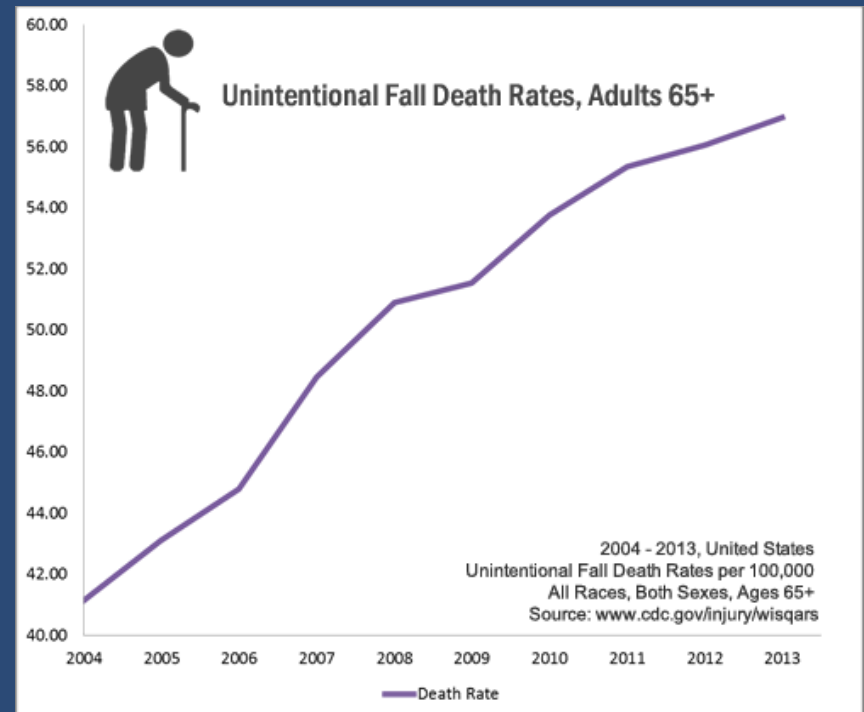
**Dr. Gina Dawson P.T.**

# What will I learn?

- ▶ Discuss ways to avoid injuries from falls
- ▶ Discuss the importance of movement
- ▶ Review medications that may cause falls
- ▶ Discuss why medical exams are needed
- ▶ Identify fall hazards

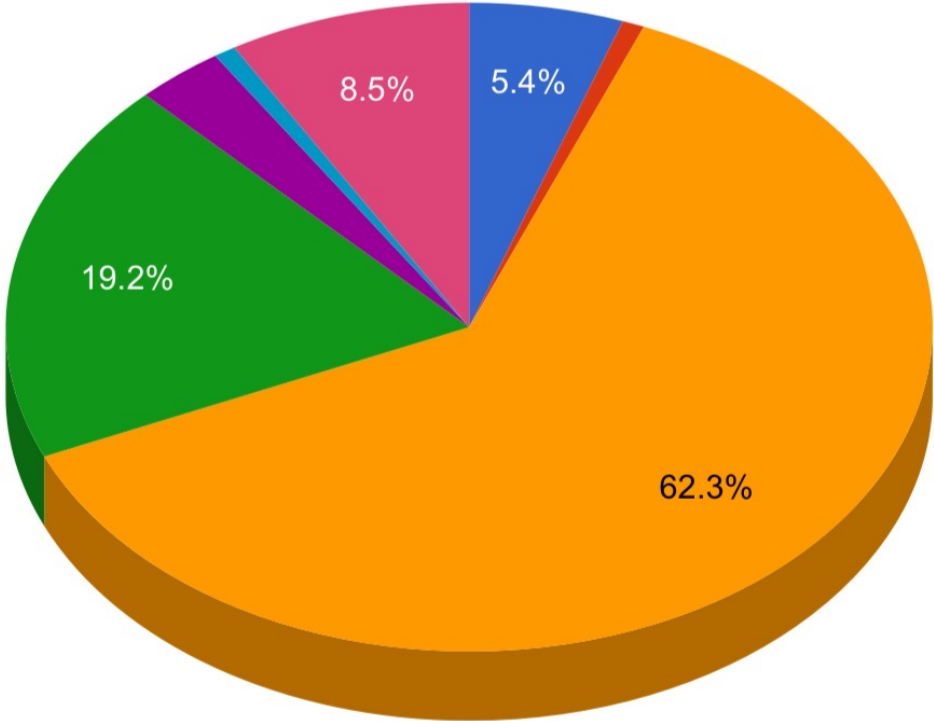
# Facts about falls

- ▶ Population over 60 is growing
- ▶ 1 in 4 people over age 65 falls each year
- ▶ Fall related injury is  
Leading cause of accidental death
- ▶ Fear of falling limits

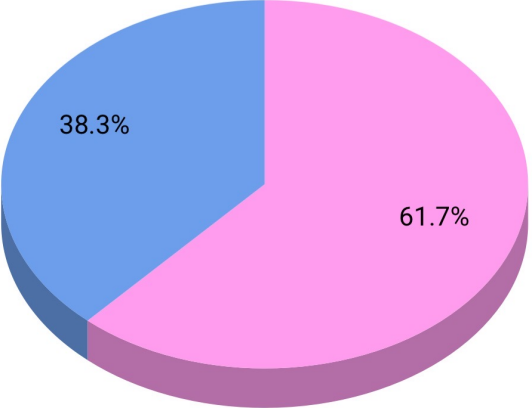


# 2016 MSTH Trauma Registry

- MVC
- Animal Bite
- Falls
- Assault
- Accidentally striking against
- Burns
- Other



- Female
- Male

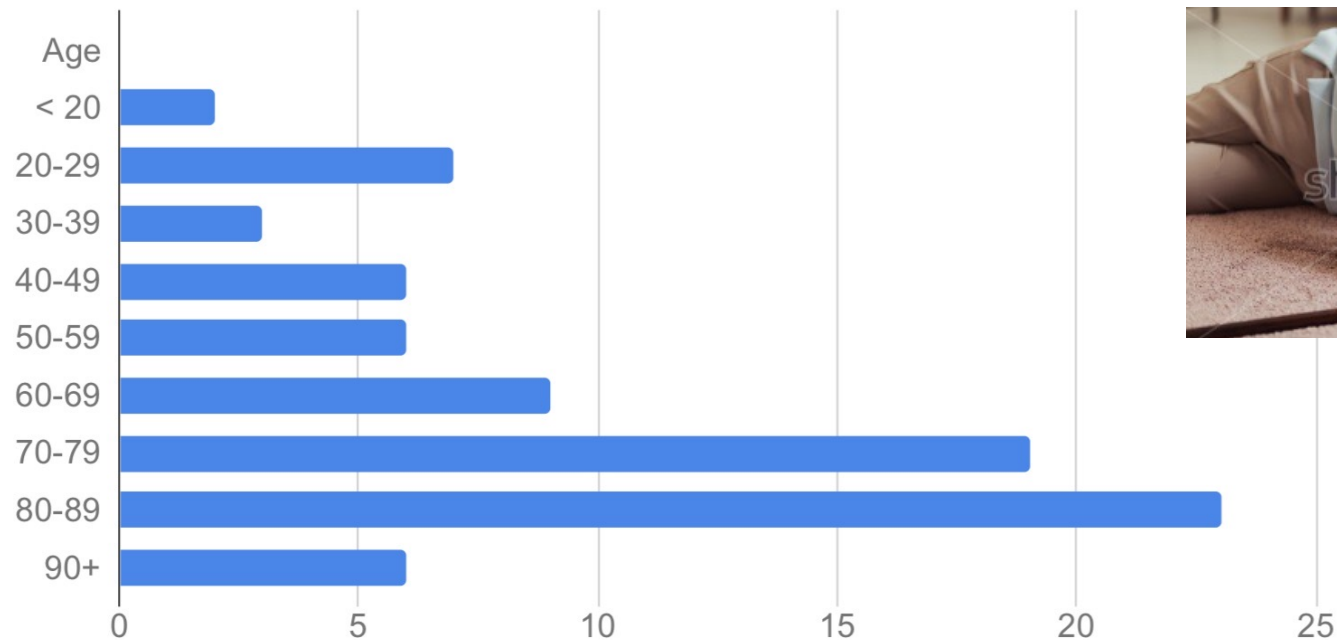


# Facts about falls

- ▶ Those who fall once are 2-3 times more likely to fall again.

81 FALL INJURIES

42 fall on level surface



Amount admitted, transferred or died



# Facts about falls

70% falls occur inside the home

20% outside the home (yard/patio)

10% out in the community

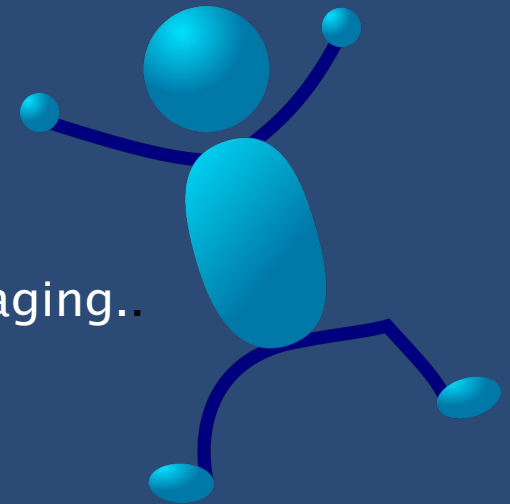
Most Seniors want to age in place.

- ▶ Hip fractures result in hospitalization for up to one week
- ▶ One in four have long term care for one year
- ▶ Injuries may reduce your ability to care for yourself and decrease your independence
- ▶ Death within 6 months of fall with injury

# Can I Prevent a Fall?

- ▶ **YES!!** Studies show that the majority of falls are preventable.
- ▶ Interventions can significantly reduce the chances of a falling.

Falls are preventable and are NOT a normal part of aging..



# How do I prevent a fall?

## Take Control of Your Health: 6 Steps to Prevent a Fall

Every **13 seconds**, an older adult is seen in an emergency department for a fall-related injury.

*Many falls are preventable.*

*Stay safe with these tips!*

**1**

### Find a good balance and exercise program

Look to build balance, strength, and flexibility. Contact your local Area Agency on Aging for referrals. Find a program you like and take a friend.



**2**

### Talk to your health care provider

Ask for an assessment of your risk of falling. Share your history of recent falls.



**3**

### Regularly review your medications with your doctor or pharmacist

Make sure side effects aren't increasing your risk of falling. Take medications only as prescribed.



**4**

### Get your vision and hearing checked annually and update your eyeglasses

Your eyes and ears are key to keeping you on your feet.



**5**

### Keep your home safe

Remove tripping hazards, increase lighting, make stairs safe, and install grab bars in key areas.



**6**

### Talk to your family members

Enlist their support in taking simple steps to stay safe. Falls are not just a seniors' issue.





# 1. Exercise & Balance

- ▶ **STAY ACTIVE!!**
- ▶ **Walking/ dancing**
- ▶ **Move even while sitting.**
  
- ▶ **Start Simple**
- ▶ **Start Slowly, gradually increase time**
- ▶ **Buddy: encourage each other**
- ▶ **Be aware of your surroundings**



# Examples of activities

## Standing- weight shifting

- ▶ Exercise classes
- ▶ Dancing
- ▶ Walking
- ▶ Ping Pong
- ▶ Tai Chi
- ▶ Gardening/ Yard work
- ▶ **Sit and Be Fit 11 am KLRN**



\*Matter of Balance Class\*

Always visit with your doctor before starting an exercise program

## 2. Talk to your medical provider

### Need to check for

- ▶ New Illness
- ▶ Blood pressure sitting and standing
- ▶ Blood test
- ▶ Medication review
- ▶ Walking/ Balance
- ▶ Vitamin D deficiency
- ▶ Underlying heart or neurological condition



# Information to discuss with your doctor



- ▶ How am I feeling – any changes??
- ▶ How am I eating?
- ▶ How I am sleeping?
- ▶ How much I am walking?
- ▶ How I am thinking, such as difficulty remembering, reading, cooking, etc.?

# Difficulty with balance



- ▶ holding onto walls, furniture, or someone else when walking
- ▶ difficulty walking or arising from a chair.

A physical therapist can help improve balance, strength, and gait through exercise.

Training in the use of a walking aid which can help maintain independence.

### 3. Review your Medications



- ▶ Medicines may increase fall risk
- ▶ Aging affects how medications work
- ▶ Some medications may not work well together
- ▶ Over the counter drugs (PM) dizziness/drowsiness
- ▶ herbs may increase fall risks
- ▶ Not taking medications correctly

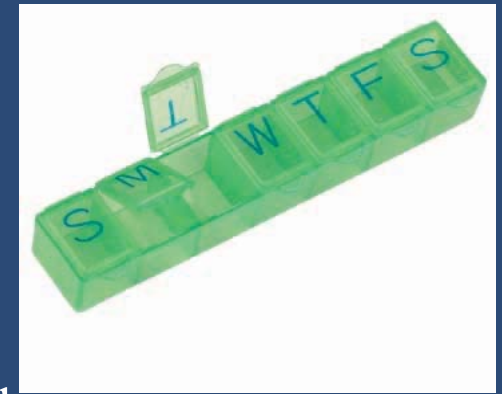
- heart medications
- insulin
- diuretics
- blood thinners
- blood pressure
- pain
- sleeping aids
- anti depressants

# Side Effects of Medications

- ▶ Blurred vision
- ▶ Change in blood pressure
- ▶ Dizziness upon standing
- ▶ Confusion, impaired judgment
- ▶ Sleepiness
- ▶ Lack of coordination
- ▶ Short term memory loss



# Taking my medications



- ▶ Read the directions – ask for larger print on the label
- ▶ Take only as directed
- ▶ Use pill boxes to organize and arrange meds
- ▶ Keep a list of all of your health care issues, medications and emergency family contacts
- ▶ **Talk to your doctor or pharmacist if you have questions about your medications when ever a new medicine is added.**

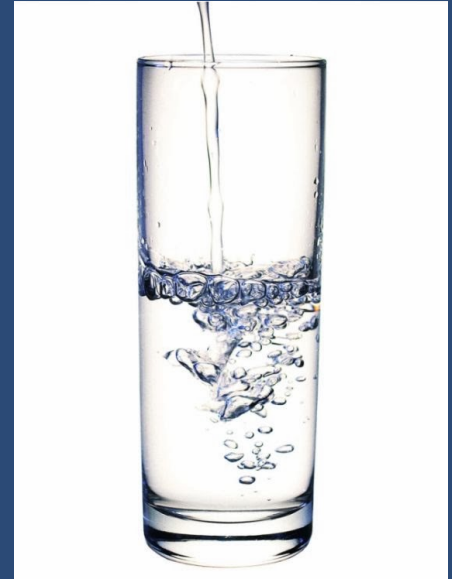


# Dehydration

- ▶ Water is the bodies principal chemical
- ▶ Every system depends on it.
- ▶ Lack of water makes the systems not work right.

- ▶ **SLIGHT DEHYDRATION**

**can cause dizziness & falls.**



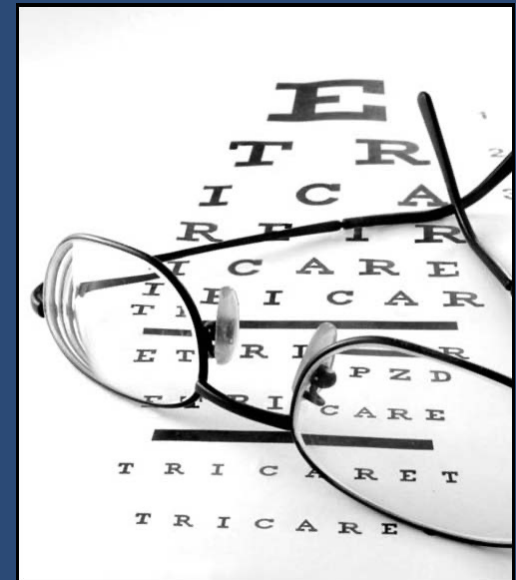
## 4. Your Eyes and Ears



- ▶ Aging is a common cause for changes in vision and hearing.
- ▶ Some vision problems occur slowly and painlessly
- ▶ Early diagnosis may reduce vision loss
- ▶ Changes can increase fall risks.

# Annual Vision Checks

- ▶ Visual clearness (acuity), depth, color perception, ability to focus and coordination of eyes
- ▶ Corrective lenses
- ▶ Sunglasses
- ▶ Medications
- ▶ Surgery



# Annual Hearing Checks



- ▶ Your sense of hearing alerts you to your environment and what is around you.
- ▶ Your hearing can also affect your vestibular system which is an important part of staying balanced.
- ▶ A recent study showed that seniors with hearing loss appeared better able to balance when they used hearing aids

## 5. Home Safety Check

- Furniture
- Throw rugs – slip/moisture resistant
- Objects on the floor – wire, cords, telephone
- Stairs and steps – clutter
- Toys
- Pets



- Loose uneven steps, loose carpet/rugs
- Poor lighting
- No night light, top and bottom of stairs
- No handrails at steps and stairs
- Carrying too much
- Rolling chairs
- Too much furniture



- Bottom of bathtub/shower is slippery
- No handrails, grab bars – shower/toilet
- Toilet is too low
- No shower chair or hand held shower is available



# Bed Room Falls

- Dim lighting
- Where are your shoes? What type of shoes?
- Robes touches the floor
- Clutter on floor
- Height of your bed – too high or too low
- Urine frequency
- Drowsiness
- Sitting-standing up too quickly
- Walking device not in reach





# Foot wear must hold foot in place



# I've fallen, now what?

- ▶ **Take your time getting up**
- ▶ Gently move your limbs and move your self by scooting or crawling.
- ▶ Get to a sturdy item to help yourself up.
- ▶ Call for help if you can not get up.
- ▶ Phone Location
- ▶ Seek Medical Attention!
- ▶ **HAVE A PLAN!**



# Bump to the head

Taking anticoagulant, blood thinner such as Aspirin,  
abuse alcohol

- Risk: **Intracranial bleed**

  - Increasing headache

  - Vomiting

  - Drowsiness and progressive loss of consciousness

  - Dizziness

  - Confusion

  - Unequal pupil size

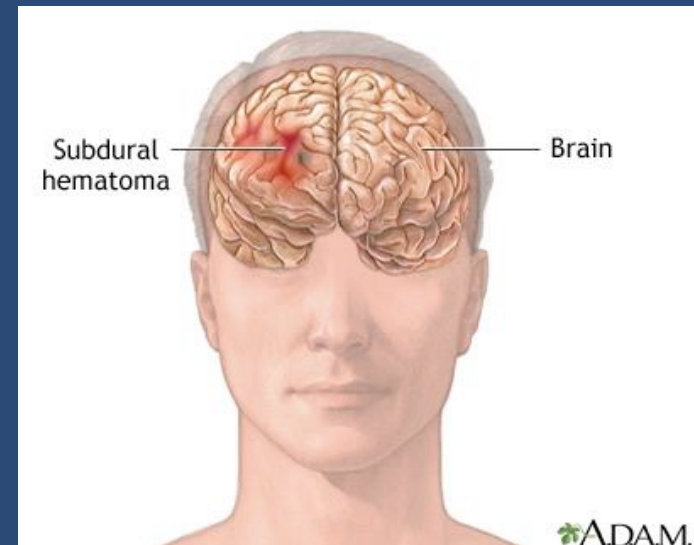
  - Slurred Speech

  - Increase blood pressure

Acute: immediate

**Subacute: 3 -7days**

Chronic: Weeks



# How can I make my life safer?

- ▶ Stay as active as possible – get stronger and work on your balance
  - ▶ Talk to your doctor about medications and changes
  - ▶ Stay hydrated
  - ▶ Get eyes and ears checked every year
  - ▶ Keep your home safe
  - ▶ Talk to your family members
- 
- ▶ Be Aware of your environment and don't be in a hurry!

# Stay Safe and Upright!





**Methodist**  
HEALTHCARE