

Fall Prevention Simplified (FPS)

A 5 Step Approach to Fall
Prevention Peace-of-Mind.



Turn frustration into a clear and focused action plan in 5 easy steps

Welcome

If you have requested this e-book, there is a good chance someone close to you may be struggling with mobility, or at risk of falling in their home. Maybe your loved one has already fallen, and you want to make sure it doesn't happen again.

We have found that if a loved one at-risk has decided to live on their own, it can create a lot of worry and concern for those who care for them; After all, you want to support their choices, but you also feel responsible for their safety.

There is a definite cause for concern... Falls and fall injuries are much more common than most realize.

Before I tell you anything about HealthCraft, I just want to let you know that: We understand what you're going through, we've been in your shoes, we're here to help....And you're in the right place.



My name is John O'Brien, I'm the co-founder of and CEO HealthCraft Products. I started HealthCraft in 1994 to help my grandmother Rita maintain her independence as she lost her mobility in later years.

At that time I found it difficult to help her given the options for good fall prevention product and information was limited. I was frustrated. As an optimistic young engineer, I decided this was a problem I could help solve, so I set to work.

In the 28 years (and counting) since, we've helped hundreds of thousands of families around the world improve safety and peace of mind.

In the following pages I want to share some of the things we have learned.



Young Rita



Grandma Rita



Optimistic
young engineer

The 5 Steps



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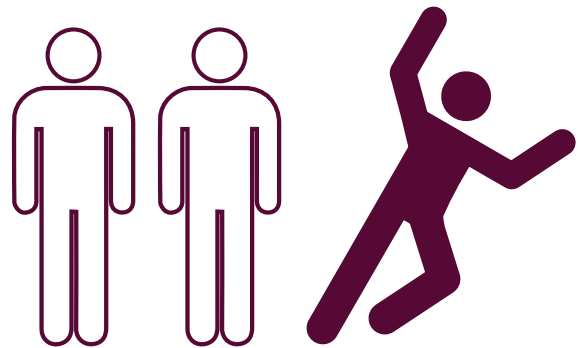
FPS STEP 1 - AWARENESS

Better solutions start with a better understanding of the problem being solved. With this in mind, an important first step is to become more informed about falls. Many people are surprised when they learn the many and varied things that can contribute to falls. We have organized these important facts into five categories below:

THE 5 SURPRISING TRUTHS ABOUT FALLS.

Surprising Truth #1 - Falls are common (much more than many realize)

This is not an obscure problem that happens to “other people.” More than 1 in 3 people over the age of 65 will suffer a fall EACH YEAR. The occurrence of falls is higher than epidemic levels and, unfortunately, is increasing.



Surprising Truth #2 Falls are impactful (much more negatively and in many more ways than most anticipate)



32,000 deaths are caused by falls in the US every year

Falls don't just happen and life moves on in the same way. In many cases, a fall becomes a major, usually negative, life event.

Falls can impact many things:

- Independence lost
- Reduced Confidence
- Mobility reduced
- Financial costs

These are some of the reasons why falls are worth preventing. Falls can result in serious injury and the need for relocation to a care home. Not to mention that falls are the leading cause of injury-related deaths for people over 65.

FPS STEP 1 - AWARENESS

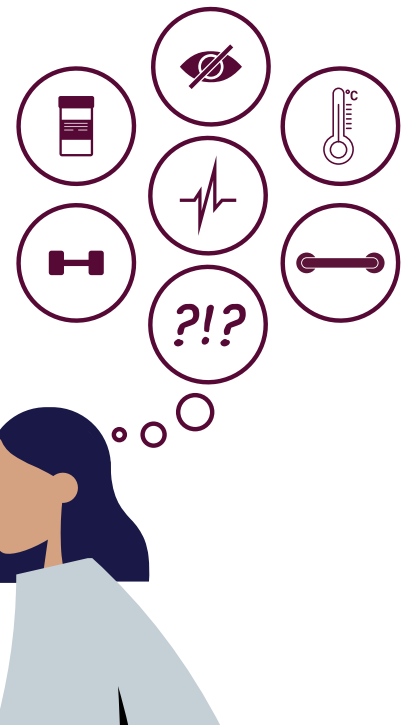
Surprising Truth #3 Falls are misunderstood (for their many & surprisingly varied causes)

Much more than just tripping on the edge of a carpet, there are many reasons for falls. Knowing more of the reasons – especially the less talked about ones – is a key to fall prevention.

A fundamental truth is to realize your ability to react and prevent a fall is related to your core strength and balance. Improve these and your fall risk decreases.

Other factors include working with a professional to review:

- Medications
- Vitamin levels
- Blood pressure
- Short-term illness
- Available handrail-type support



Surprising Truth #4 Fall Prevention can be complex (especially when challenges around relationships and beliefs are thrown into the mix)



These are the things that leave loved ones saying, “This is so hard,” and “I never saw this challenge coming.”

Falls can be difficult to solve because of:

- Denial
- False beliefs
- Stubbornness
- Reluctance to change

It’s one thing to be in your prime. It’s another thing to ignore shortcomings, navigate stubbornness, or move through false beliefs.

It’s time we all start doing a better job of helping each other through some of the sticky parts of aging.

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FPS STEP 1 - AWARENESS

GOOD NEWS,

Surprising Truth #5 Falls are PREVENTABLE! (in fact, much more preventable than most people realize)

There is a big upside to doing fall prevention prep work. Many of the risk factors that contribute to falls can be identified and addressed before they cause an incident. That's why it is estimated that up to 50% of falls can – and should – be prevented.

You'll find many of these options outlined in the next steps of the Fall Prevention Simplified Process.



FPS STEP 2 - DISCUSSION

Like it or not, you'll need to have one or more conversations with your at-risk loved one to accomplish your goal of preventing falls.

Sometimes these are easy, and for others, they are hard.

Here's Where Conversations Tend to Get Stuck:

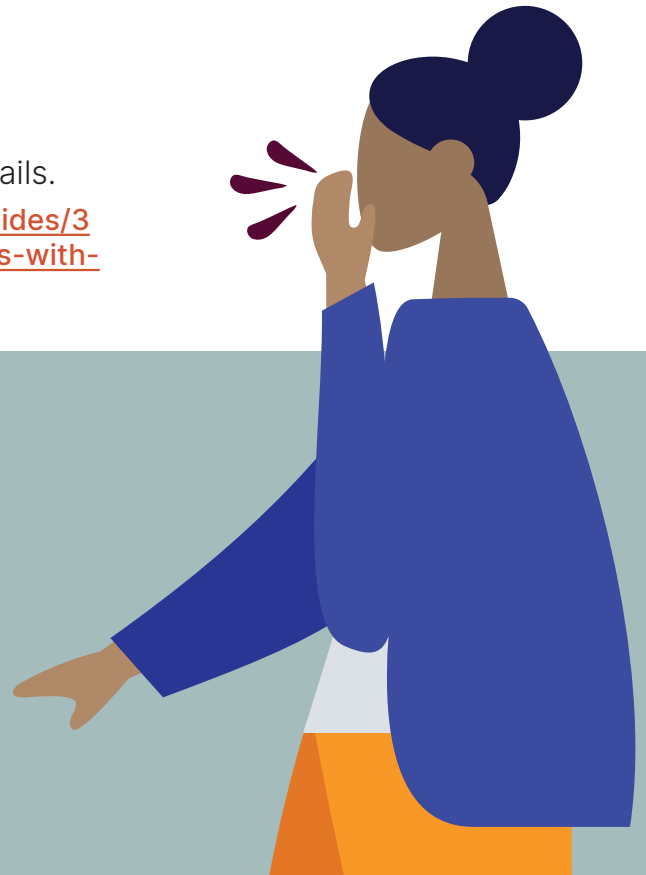
- Ideas about aging
- Reluctance to change
- Pride
- Avoidance
- Protection of sense of self
- Incorrect information

Effective Conversation Tips:

- Invite two-way honesty
- Focus on shared goals
- Agree on action steps
- Acknowledge feelings of loss or pride

Visit our Fall Conversation Guide for more details.

<https://healthcraftproducts.com/articles-and-guides/3-ways-to-navigate-fall-prevention-conversations-with-your-aging-parent/>



FPS STEP 3 - ASSESSMENT

Not sure where to begin?

Start by assessing the situation on two fronts: physical health and the home environment.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Fall prevention is about health state as much as it is about hardware and home modifications.

The two most important areas of fall risk reduction are general body strength and balance.

BALANCE

With good balance, you're more steady on your feet and your body is able to self-correct when changing positions or walking on uneven surfaces.

Balance can be affected by many (surprising) factors which can include:


- Blood pressure
- Medications
- Supplements
- Vision
- Brain function
- Vertigo
- Sleep

GENERAL BODY STRENGTH

General body strength refers to the overall muscle and endurance of the body. The stronger you are, the easier it is to get up from a seated position, move throughout your home, and do daily activities. In many cases, improving one's core body strength can be the most impactful way to reduce fall risk.

Strength can be affected by:

- Inactivity
- Acute illness
- Dehydration or poor nutrition
- Medical conditions
- Body type
- History of physical activity



Balance and strength tend to decline as part of the aging process, but a little effort can go a long way boosting physical health as part of a fall prevention plan.

FPS STEP 3 - ASSESSMENT

Along with a healthy lifestyle, **balance and general body strength can be improved by:**

- Consulting with healthcare professionals such as your physician, pharmacist, or optometrist.
- Maintaining a daily routine that keeps you active and moving.
- Finding an exercise program that works for you by investigating local exercise groups or meeting with a physical therapist.
- Some of the easy steps that make a big difference
- Beginning a simple exercise program addressing strength and balance. Ideally something fun and engaging like walking, dance, tai chi, or other activities.
- Exploring adding vitamin D as a supplement.
- Addressing an underlying medical condition or medication impacting energy or balance.
- Reviewing eyewear prescriptions to ensure one can spot and avoid trip hazards.

WHERE TO START WITH PHYSICAL HEALTH

Discussion with your Doctor: Tell your doctor about any concerns related to falls and ask for a medication review or other referrals.



TAKE A FALL RISK ASSESSMENT

Head to this quick questionnaire which will help you identify if health factors are putting you at risk for falls.

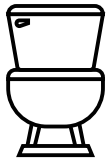
<https://ncoa.org/age-well-planner/assessment/falls-free-checkup>

Please Note: This is not a detailed assessment designed to replace the expertise of a medical professional. Rather it's a screening tool to open conversation and give you some ideas on where to begin.

FPS STEP 3 - ASSESSMENT

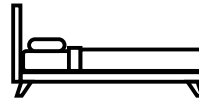
HOME ENVIRONMENT

Reduce risks right away and plan for your future self by identifying and modifying the home to prevent falls. Here are the top locations and daily living activities that cause falls.



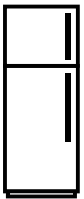
Bathrooms

Falls can happen when getting up from the toilet, slipping in the shower, or trying to move around in a tight space.



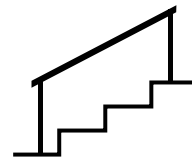
Bedrooms

Falls happen due to poor lighting, blood pressure changes when standing up, or physical fatigue at the end of the day.



Kitchens

Falls can happen due to slippery floors, standing, carrying items, or reaching into cupboards.



Stairs

People can trip or lose balance and fall down the stairs either inside or outside.

Improvements and changes you might consider making:

- VISUAL – Increasing lighting & providing clear colour contrast for edges of thresholds and steps
- CLEAR ACCESS – Removing loose throw rugs & clearing pathways
- STANDING SUPPORT – Adding grab bar support & floor-to-ceiling support rails near a chair or bed
- TRIP HAZARD – Fixing broken or uneven stairs & wearing good footwear
- SELF-CARE SAFETY – Making shower modifications & raising your toilet seat



TAKE THE HOME SAFETY ASSESSMENT.

This will give you an idea of what areas in your home represent a potential fall risk.

<https://healthcraftproducts.com/articles-and-guides/dont-treat-falls-prevent-them-with-this-checklist/>

FPS STEP 4 - PLAN

After assessing your situation, you'll have an idea of what problems you want to address. The next step is finding solutions for those problems. The good news is that you have plenty of options – many of which aren't expensive, complicated, or make your living space feel like a hospital.

This is one of the ways that HealthCraft is here to simplify the path for you. We want to introduce you to the professionals and products to make planning an easy step.

MEET SOME PEOPLE WHO ARE EAGER TO HELP

There are professionals who help people come up with solutions for reducing falls and navigating the impact of aging.

Physical Therapists

Assess strength and balance to develop an exercise program.

Occupational Therapists

Aging, accessibility, and daily activity experts who partner with you to create a plan.

Accessibility Contractor

Help with renovation or home updates.

Product Creators

Here is where we shine at HealthCraft. A little support in the right places can save the day. We provide well-designed products for reducing falls. Check out our product lines.

Even when we don't produce a product for your situation, we share who can provide the solution you're looking for.

Aging in Place Specialists: Might have a CAPS or CLIPS certification. These are professionals dedicated to helping you stay at home as you age.



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FPS STEP 4 - PLAN

LET'S START BUILDING YOUR PLAN

- ☐ Visit your doctor
- ☐ Review medications with your pharmacist
- ☐ Contact an occupational therapist
- ☐ List all the risk factors and then highlight those you can change
- ☐ Review medications
- ☐ Connect with an aging-in-place specialist
- ☐ Get more information about fall prevention safety products
- ☐ Get an exercise or activity program
- ☐ Address vision with an optometrist
- ☐ Have a conversation with your loved ones
- ☐ Review lighting needs and add if needed
- ☐ Explore using a cane or walker



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FPS STEP 5 - IMPLEMENTATION

Now that you've done the legwork, built up your knowledge, and created a plan, it's time to pull the trigger and do the work.

Your Tips for This Step:

- Tackle one thing at a time
- Remind yourself and your loved one of the shared goals
- Build a support system to help you

Our biggest piece of advice, pick something and just get started. Action today is better than a great plan that sits unused until it's too late.

Once complete, enjoy peace of mind knowing you're reducing your likelihood of being a "preventable fall" statistic.

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

Taking the first steps leads to new questions and roadblocks.
These are an expected part of the process.

Eliminating falls is possible when you have the right resources and support to simplify fall prevention – so you can TAKE POWERFUL ACTION. And we're here to support you the whole way.

