



We at Bayside Foot Clinic take tripping & falling very seriously. Our aim is to prevent falls by improving your foundation. Often this requires insuring appropriate footwear & restoring balance.

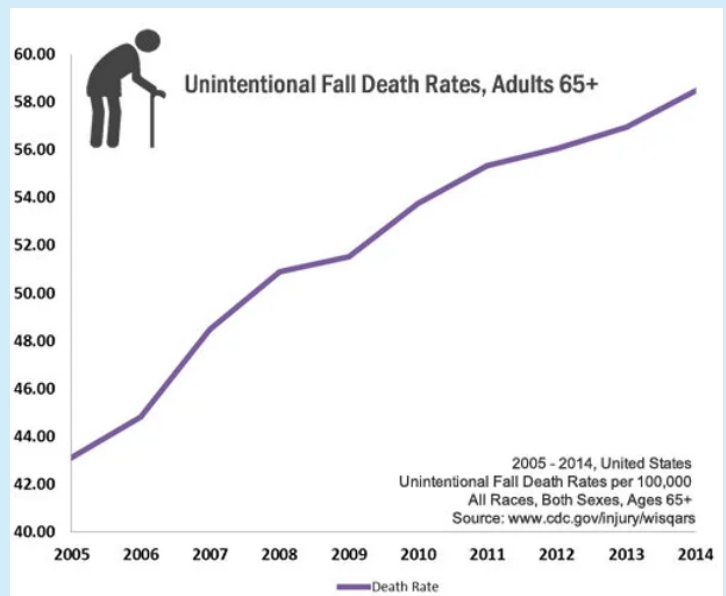
We can assess you by taking a biomechanical scan/gait analysis to see if there are any postural imbalances.

Falls are a common and serious health threat to adults 65 and older. Every year, more than 1 in 4 older adults fall, but more than half of those who fall don't tell their healthcare provider. Falls affect us all - whether personally or someone we love or care about.

Every second of every day an older adult falls. In 2014 alone, more than one in four older adults reported falling and more than 27,000 older adults died as a result of falls - that's 74 older adults every day. There are simple steps you can take to prevent falls and decrease falls risks.

FALLS ARE SERIOUS & COSTLY

- 1 in 5 falls cause serious injury such as broken bones or head injuries
- Each year, 2.8 million older people are treated in emergency departments for fall injuries
- Over 800,000 patients a year are hospitalized because of a fall injury, most often because of a head injury or hip fracture
- Each year, at least 300,000 older people are hospitalized for hip fractures
- More than 95% of hip fractures are caused by falling, usually by falling sideways
- Falls are the most common cause of traumatic brain injuries (TBI)
- Adjusted for inflation, the direct medical costs for all injuries are \$31 billion annually. Hospital costs account for two-thirds of the total



WHAT CONDITONS MAKE YOU MORE LIKELY TO FALL?

Research has identified many conditions that contribute to falling. These are called RISK FACTORS. Many risk factors can be changed or modified to help prevent falls. They include:

1. Lower body weakness
2. Vitamin D deficiency (that is, not enough Vitamin D in your system)
3. Difficulties with walking and balance
4. Use of medicines, such as tranquilizers, sedatives or antidepressants. Even some over-the-counter medicines can affect balance and how steady you are on your feet
5. Vision problems
6. Foot pain or poor footwear
7. Home hazards or dangers such as:
 - broken or uneven steps &
 - throw rugs or clutter that can be tripped over



WHAT CAN HAPPEN AFTER A FALL?

Many falls do not cause injuries. But one out of five falls does cause a serious injury, such as a broken bone or head injury. These injuries can make it hard for a person to get around, do everyday activities, or live on their own.

- Falls can cause broken bones ie: wrist, arm, ankle & hip fractures
- Falls can cause head injuries - These can be very serious, especially if the person is taking certain medicines (like blood thinners). An older person who falls and hits their head should see their doctor right away to make sure they don't have a brain injury.
- Many people who fall, even if they're not injured, become afraid of falling. This fear may cause a person to cut down on their everyday activities. When a person is less active, they become weaker, and this increased their chances of falling.



Most falls are caused by a combination of risk factors. The more risk factors a person has, the greater their chances of falling. Healthcare providers can help cut down a person's risk by reducing the fall risk factors listed above.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PREVENT FALLS

Falls can be prevented. These are some simple things you can do to keep yourself from falling:

1. TALK TO YOUR PODIATRIST

- Ask your podiatrist or healthcare provider to evaluate your risk for falling and talk with them about specific things you can do.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review your medicines to see if any might make you dizzy or sleepy. This should include prescription medicines and over-the-counter medicines.
- Ask your doctor or healthcare provider about taking vitamin D supplements.



2. DO STRENGTH & BALANCE EXERCISES



Do exercises that make your legs stronger and improve your balance. **Tai Chi** is a good example of this kind of exercise.

3. HAVE YOUR EYES CHECKED

Have your eyes checked by an eye doctor at least once a year, and be sure to update your eyeglasses if needed.

If you have bifocal or progressive lenses, you may want to get a pair of glasses with only your distance prescription for outdoor activities, such as walking. Sometimes these types of lenses can make things seem closer or farther away than they really are.



4. MAKE YOUR HOME SAFER

- Get rid of things you could trip over
- Add grab bars inside and outside your tub or shower AND next to the toilet
- Put railings on both sides of stairs
- Make sure your home has lots of light by adding more or brighter light bulbs



5. CHOOSE CORRECT FOOTWEAR

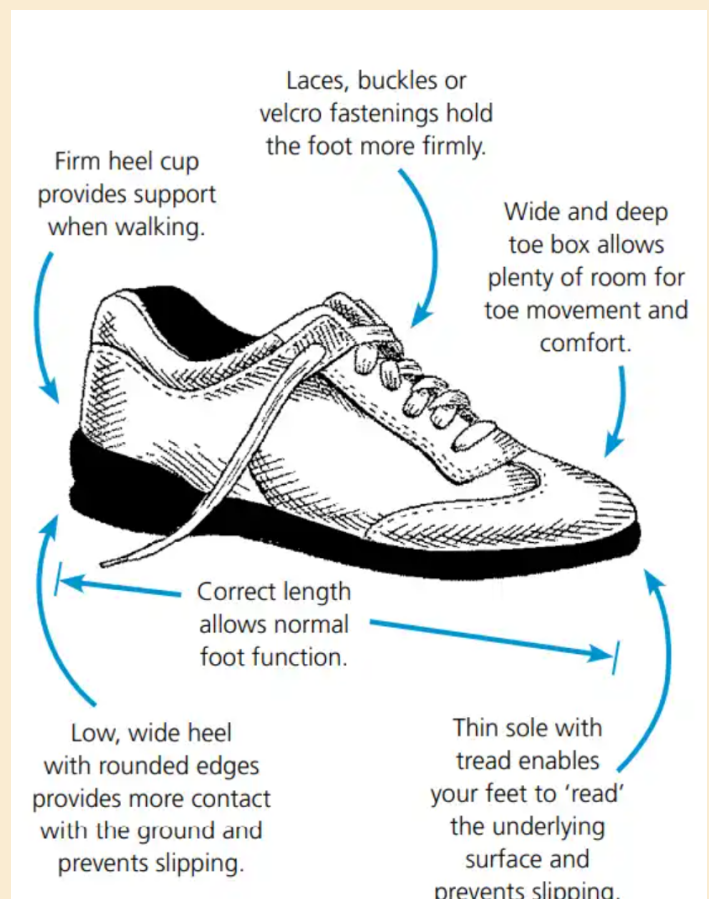
Falls prevention from the ground up - feet and footwear:

As we age, our feet can change shape and lose some feeling and flexibility. This changes the way we walk and affects balance. Painful or swollen feet can make it difficult to walk. Also, some shoes or slippers can make you more likely to slip, trip or stumble, leading to a fall.

What you can do:

- See a podiatrist or doctor if you have painful or swollen feet, tingling or pins and needles in your feet or if you have any changes in the shape of your feet (for example, bunions).
- Choose comfortable, firm-fitting, flat shoes with a low broad heel and soles that grip (see picture).
- Don't wear poorly fitted slippers or walk in socks.
- If you have difficulty finding suitable shoes because of foot problems, ask your podiatrist for the names of specialist shoe stores.
- Ask your podiatrist or physiotherapist to suggest ways to improve circulation, decrease swelling and reduce pain in the legs and feet.

Prevent Falls with Safe Shoes



For more falls prevention information, please visit <https://www.health.gov.au> - search for "Don't Fall For It"