Evidence-Based Falls Prevention Programs: Saving Lives, Saving Money

THE CHALLENGE: Older Adult Falls in the U.S.

- **1 in 4 Americans** aged 65+ falls each year
- **Every 11 seconds**, an older adult is treated in the emergency room for a fall
- **Every 19 minutes**, an older adult dies from a fall

Falls are Common

Falls in adults aged 65+ are the leading cause of head injuries and broken hips

THE SOLUTION: Proven Community-Based Programs

**A Matter of Balance**
8-session workshop to reduce fear of falling and increase activity among older adults in the community

- **97%** of participants feel more comfortable talking about their fear of falling
- **99%** of participants plan to continue exercising
- **$938** savings in unplanned medical costs per Medicare beneficiary

**Otago Exercise Program**
Individual program of muscle strengthening and balance exercises prescribed by a physical therapist for frail older adults living at home (aged 80+)

- **35%** reduction in falls rate
- **$429** net benefit per participant
- **127%** ROI**

**Stepping On**
7-week program that offers older adults living in the community proven strategies to reduce falls and increase self-confidence

- **30%** reduction in falls rate
- **$134** net benefit per participant
- **64%** ROI

**Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance***
Balance and gait training program of controlled movements for older adults and people with balance disorders

- **55%** reduction in falls rate
- **$530** net benefit per participant
- **509%** ROI

Falls are Common

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**Falls are Costly**

In 2013, the total cost of fall injuries was **$34 billion** (78% paid by Medicare)

- **This total cost may reach $67.7 billion** by 2020
- **Even falls without injury can cause fear of falling**, leading to physical decline, depression, and social isolation

Learn more about these and other proven programs at [ncoa.org/FallsPrevention](http://ncoa.org/FallsPrevention)

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Sources:

Report to Congress in November 2013: The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services’ Evaluation of Community-based Wellness and Prevention Programs under Section 4202 (b) of the Affordable Care Act. [http://innovation.cms.gov/Files/reports/CommunityWellnessRTC.pdf](http://innovation.cms.gov/Files/reports/CommunityWellnessRTC.pdf)

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* Net benefit = Direct medical costs averted (e.g., emergency department visits, hospitalizations, rehab, homecare) after subtracting intervention costs
** ROI (return on investment) = Net benefit per participant divided by average cost of the program per participant; percentage of return for each dollar invested
***Now known as “Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance”