Did you Know...every year in the U.S., more than 1/3 of adults age 65+ have a fall, with approximately 1/3 of fallers sustaining an injury? Research indicates that people who fall are 2-3 times more likely to fall again, and each fall increases the likelihood of more serious injury or death.

Ohio Falls Facts

- Ohioans 65 and older accounted for approximately 82% of fatal falls in 2009; while they represent only 14% of the population.
- From 2000 to 2009, Ohioans aged 65 and older experienced a 125% increase in the number of fatal falls and 112% increase in the fall death rate.
- On average, 2.3 older Ohioans suffered fatal falls each day in 2009.
- Fall-related hospitalizations and hospitalization rates increased 61% and 51% respectively from 2002 to 2009.
- Falls are the leading cause of injury-related ER visits, hospitalizations and deaths for Ohioans aged 65 and older. Fall-related ED visit and hospitalization rates for Ohioans 65 years and older are higher than rates for all other injuries combined.
- Risk for suffering serious injury after a fall increases dramatically with advancing age. Females 85 years and older account for half of fatal falls, while they account for only 3% of the female population.

Fall Deaths are Only the Tip of the Iceberg

As the population ages, the impact and cost of fall-related deaths and injuries will increase dramatically unless this serious public health issue is addressed effectively. The proportion of Ohioans aged 65 and older is projected to increase by 50% from 2010–2030.
Ohio Responds
Falling is NOT an inevitable result of aging. Through evidence-based interventions, practical lifestyle adjustments, and community partnerships, we can substantially reduce the number of falls. Ohio is taking action to prevent falls through the following initiatives:

- The Ohio Department of Health (ODH), Violence and Injury Prevention Program was instrumental in forming the Ohio Injury Prevention Partnership (OIPP) in 2007. One of the priority areas of the OIPP includes fall prevention, with a focus on older Ohioans.
- In 2008 a Fall Prevention Action Group was formed among interested OIPP members and in 2009 the ODH offered a request for proposals for an organization to facilitate the expansion, maintenance and deliberate actions of the Action Group.
- Activities in 2010 have included determination of a work group structure, drafting of goals and objectives, plans for observation of Fall Prevention Awareness Day 2010, and enhanced promotion of Coalition activities through the OPHA website and communications networks.
- Ohio is offering Regional Leadership Summits in the fall of 2011. Working to implement action steps in the Ohio Plan, two of four regional Leadership Summits have been held, with over 120 professionals in attendance. Two more Summits are scheduled to be held by the end of November. As a result of the Summits, participants are encouraged to share information learned within their communities and/or to form or become actively involved in a local Fall Prevention Coalition to keep the message going.

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Ohio Older Adult Falls Prevention Coalition State Plan:

Sources:
Ohio Department of Health, Office of Healthy Ohio. Violence and Injury Prevention Program. (2009). Fall-Related Injury Among Older Adults in Ohio
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Developed by the National Council on Aging The National Council on Aging is a nonprofit service and advocacy organization with headquarters in Washington, DC. The NCOA is a national voice for older Americans – especially those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged – and the community organizations that serve them. For more information, please visit www.ncoa.org