



*Age-Friendly*  
INNOVATORS

*We will change the way you  
think about aging*

## **Falls among Older Adults<sup>1</sup>**

In 2012 the direct medical cost of older adult (age 65 and older) falls, adjusted for inflation, was \$30 billion. Tragically, among older adults, falls are the leading cause of both fatal and non-fatal injuries.

As the baby boomer generation ages (each day 10,000 Americans reach age 65 and that trend will continue every day for the next 19 years) the consequences of older adult falls will only become greater.

### **How big is the problem?**

- One out of three older adults falls each year, but less than half talk to their healthcare provider about it.
- In 2012, 2.4 million nonfatal falls among older adults were treated in emergency departments and more than 722,000 of these patients were hospitalized.
- A large proportion of fall deaths are due to complications following a hip fracture. One out of five hip fracture patients dies within a year of their injury.

### **Who is at risk?**

- In 2011, about 22,900 older adults died from unintentional fall injuries
- People age 75 and older who fall are four to five times more likely than those age 65-74 to be admitted to a long-term care facility for a year or longer.

### **How can older adults prevent falls?**

- Regular exercise that focus on leg strength. Consider Tai Chi.
- Get a review of all your prescription and over-the-counter medicines from doctor or pharmacist.
- Have an annual eye exam.
- Make their homes safer by reducing tripping hazards, adding grab bars in and around tub, shower and toilet.
- Add railings on both sides of stairways.
- Secure or remove throw rugs.
- Improve lighting throughout the home.

---

<sup>1</sup> Compiled from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention materials