

## Learn more

### Health education workshops.

Call HMSA at 1 (855) 329-5461 toll-free or visit [hmsa.com/well-being](https://hmsa.com/well-being).

### Hawaii Department of Health. Visit [health.hawaii.gov](https://health.hawaii.gov).

In the search box on the top right corner of the home page, type "preventing falls."



# Finding Balance

Take proper steps to help prevent falls.



An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association



## Falls are a common cause of injury

for Hawaii's kupuna. You could fall when you least expect it – while you're out with friends or family, running errands, or at home.

Nationally, one in three people age 65 or older falls every year. Many go to the emergency room or are hospitalized. Falling can cause broken bones or brain injuries that can lead to disability or less mobility.

## Risks of falling

You're more likely to fall as you get older if you:

- Aren't active.
- Aren't aware of possible hazards around you.
- Have chronic pain, such as arthritis or foot damage from diabetes.
- Suffered a stroke.
- Take many prescription medications.

## Fall prevention tips

You can help prevent yourself or a loved one from falling.

**Check your home.** About half of falls happen at home. Remove clutter on the floor that could cause you to trip. Make sure you have:

- Grab bars in bathrooms.
- Handrails near stairs.
- Nonslip mats under rugs.
- Proper lighting in rooms and hallways, including night lights.

## Be careful outdoors.

Uneven ground and stairs could cause you to lose your balance. Be aware of your surroundings and use a cane or walker for more stability.

## Get some exercise.

Strengthen your muscles to help maintain your balance. It's not too late to start exercising. You can do simple exercises while sitting down. Talk to your doctor about exercises that are right for you.

## Check your eyes.

Wear glasses or contacts as needed. See an eye doctor every year to see if you need to change your prescription.

## Check your prescription drugs.

If your medications are making you dizzy or drowsy, talk to your doctor about switching your medication or adjusting the dose. Ask how your prescriptions interact with other pills and supplements you're taking.

