

# Healthy News – Fall Prevention

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**PROMOTE** We coordinate with community partners (YMCA-Hastings, Clay County Health Department, Good Samaritan Village) and area professionals to offer three programs that reduce the risk of falls: *Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance*, *Stepping On*, and *Bingocize*. These programs help older adults gain strength, improve balance, and build confidence to help them live healthier lives and preserve their independence. The programs are evidence-based, meaning they have been proven to be successful in reducing falls in older adults by about 30%. Fewer falls mean fewer injuries, fewer visits to the emergency room, fewer hospitalizations, and fewer deaths due to a fall. One way to know your risk of falling is to get a falls risk check up with your health care provider or at the health department. You can also go online and take the National Council on Aging's [Falls Free CheckUp](https://www.ncoa.org/tools/falls-free-checkup/) (<https://www.ncoa.org/tools/falls-free-checkup/>). Whether you're a caregiver, a healthcare provider, or simply someone who cares, your support matters. Advocate for accessible healthcare, inclusive community programs, and policies that prioritize aging with grace.



**PREVENT** Falls are the leading cause of both fatal and nonfatal injury for people 65 years of age and older. Even falls without injury can cause fear of falling which can lead to physical decline, depression, and social isolation. Falls threaten the safety and independence of older South Heartland residents and have significant personal and economic costs. However, falls can be prevented and do not need to be expected as a natural part of aging.

**PROTECT** We can make a difference! One way to do this is to teach older adults, their families and their caregivers what they can do to reduce the risk of falls and also to provide tools for keeping older adults safe, healthy and independent. Research shows that making some behavior changes can significantly reduce falls among older adults. For example, experts recommend:

- Participating in a physical activity routine with balance, strength training, and flexibility components.
- Consulting with a health professional or the health department about getting a falls risk assessment.
- Reviewing medications with a health professional periodically.
- Getting eyes and ears checked annually.
- Making sure your home environment is safe and supportive.

Questions: Contact SHDHD, 606 N Minnesota Ave, Hastings, NE 402-462-6211