

# Falls Prevention

## Informational Fact Sheet



## Falls Among Older Adults

Falls are the leading cause of injury among older adults. Falls also impact quality of life as they potentially result in a loss of functional independence. Poor muscle strength, lack of balance, and inflexibility are linked to a sedentary lifestyle and greatly increase the risk of falling. Other factors such as the fear of falling are also influential on the risk of falling.

Evidence-based falls prevention programs for older adults target contributing factors to the risk of falling and have been shown to help reduce the number of falls for participants. By identifying potential issues, such as environmental hazards, participants are able to make positive changes in their lives that overall improve self-efficacy.

### Facts of Falling

Statistics provided by the  
NCOA

- One-third of Americans aged 65+ falls each year
- Falls are the leading cause of fatal injury among older adults
- Falls result in more than 2.3 million fall injuries treated in emergency departments annually

Joining an evidence-based program not only helps participants reduce the fear of falling, it also facilitates a healthy, social environment where friendships are formed!



## Ways to Reduce Your Risk of Falling

### Understanding your Risks for Falling

To most effectively reduce your risk of falling, individuals must first identify their individual risk of falling. Many risks, including environmental hazards in the home and community, may be reduced. Additionally, individuals can attend classes aimed at reducing the overall risk of falling.



### Contact SVHAP for More Information

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### Matter of Balance

This fall prevention program emphasizes practical strategies to reduce fear of falling and increase activity levels. Participants learn to view falls and fear of falling as controllable; set realistic goals to increase activity; change their environment to reduce fall risk factors, and exercise to increase strength and balance.



### Enhance Fitness

Enhance Fitness is a structured group exercise program that focuses on stretching, flexibility, balance, low impact aerobics, and strength training exercises. It has been shown to help older adults to improve their health status and reduce their use of health care.



## SVHAP: Who We Are

It is the mission of SVHAP to create and support partnerships between community organizations to ensure that evidence-based health promotion programs are widely available on an on-going basis throughout Santa Clara County for all older adults.

Currently, SVHAP is offering training in both Matter of Balance and Enhance Fitness, both of which have been shown to reduce the risk of falling for older adults.

