

FACT SHEET

Feet and Footwear for Older Adults

Footcare and safe shoes can prevent falls

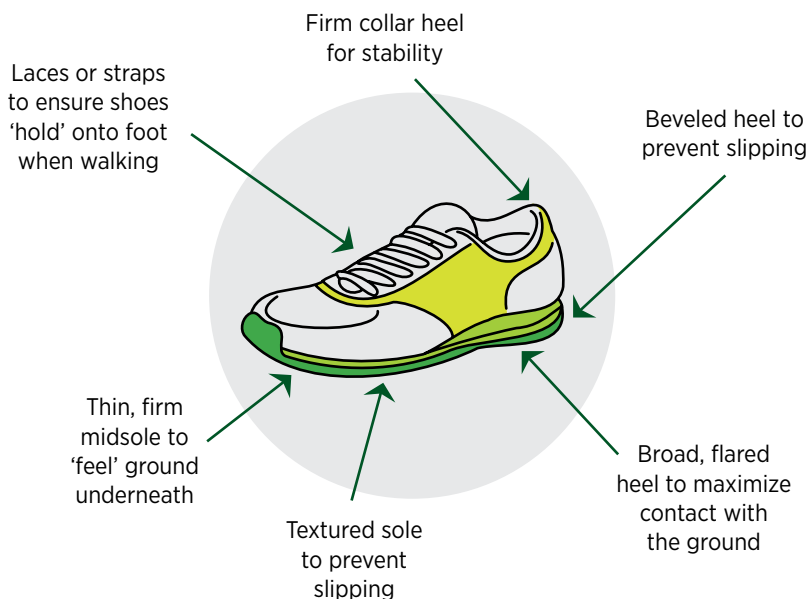
Falls are the leading cause of injury for older adults (ages 65 and older) and can have serious consequences, like limited mobility and loss of independence. Routine care for feet and proper supportive footwear can reduce your risk of falls.

What foot problems are associated with falls?

Foot related risk factors that increase fall risk:

- ▶ Increased foot pain
- ▶ Reduced flexibility in ankle joint
- ▶ Reduced calf muscle strength (the muscle that helps you rise on the balls of your feet)
- ▶ Reduced sensation resulting from neuropathy (nerve damage)
- ▶ Presence of a bunion (hallux valgus deformity) or toe deformities

What makes a shoe safe?



Footwear Tips

Health Tips

- Your healthcare provider or podiatrist can check your feet and determine if there are issues that increase your risk of falling. Podiatrists diagnose and treat foot conditions.
- Ask your healthcare provider to check your feet once a year.
- See a podiatrist if you have foot problems, such as toe or foot deformities or foot pain.
- Work with a physical therapist to learn exercises to increase strength and flexibility of foot and ankle.

Safety Tips

- Always wear properly fitted shoes inside and outside your home.
- Wear sturdy shoes with low heels, traction, and strong arch and heel support.

Working with your healthcare provider or podiatrist to address foot problems and using appropriate footwear can reduce your risk of falling.



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