

Falls among Older Adults in New York City: A Data Profile

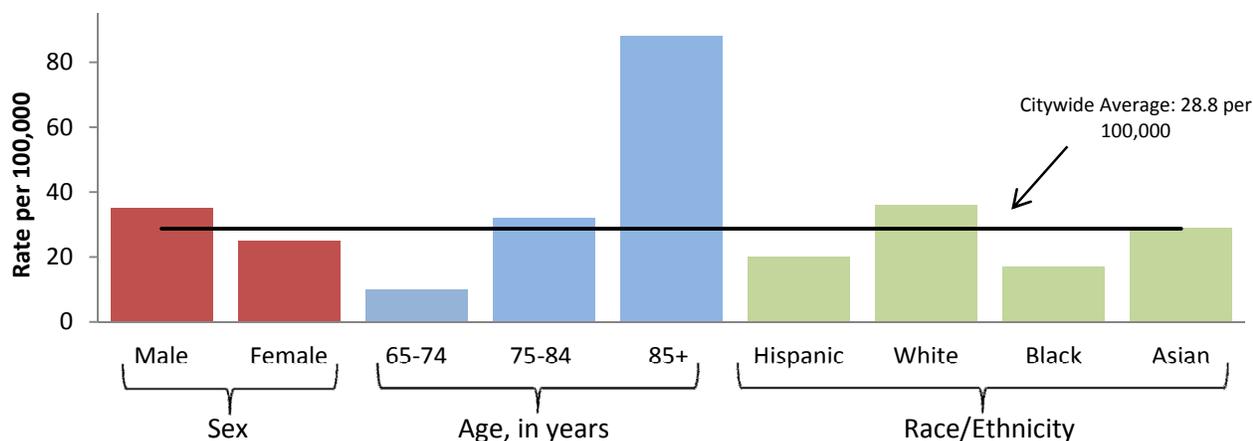
Falls among older adults are a serious public health problem in New York City. Every year thousands of older adults suffer injuries and hundreds die as a result of falling. Unintentional injury, with falls as its largest contributor, is a [leading cause of death](#) and [hospitalization](#) among older adults (age 65 and older) in New York City.

Magnitude of the problem:

- Each year, approximately 300 older adults die in New York City from falls, accounting for nearly half of all injury-related deaths.
- Falls lead to approximately 24,000 emergency department visits and 18,000 hospitalizations annually among older adults.
- Unintentional injuries are the 4th leading cause of hospitalizations among older adults, and a third of those injuries are caused by falls.
- Falls-related hospitalizations among older adults in New York City cost approximately \$698 million dollars in 2007.

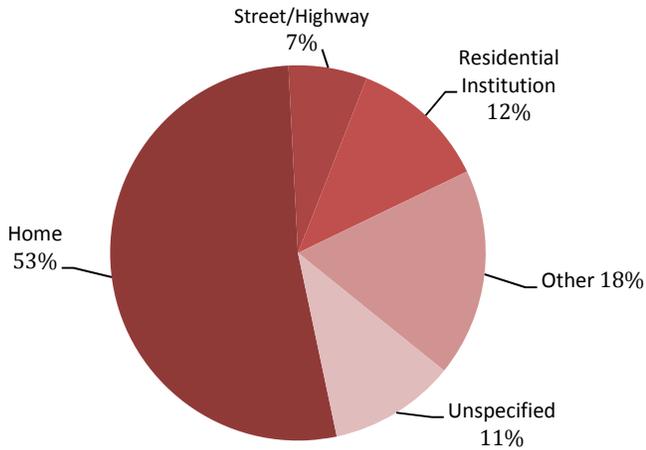


Fall-Related Death Rates Among Older Adults



Sex, Age, and Race/Ethnicity:

- Falls death rates are 1.4 times greater among males than females (34.6 per 100,000 versus 25.0 per 100,000).
- Falls death rates among adults aged 85 and older (87.7 per 100,000) are much higher than older adults between the ages of 65 and 74 years (9.7 per 100,000) and 75 and 84 years (31.6 per 100,000)
- Among older adults, whites (36.4 per 100,000) and Asians (29.1 per 100,000) have higher death rates from falls than Hispanics (19.8 per 100,000) and Blacks (17.3 per 100,000).



Place:

- Among older adult falls that require hospitalization, slightly more than half (53%) occur in the home.
- More than one-third (39%) of fall-related hospitalizations among older adults result in a discharge to a skilled nursing facility.

Intervention Strategies:

- Strategies that combine interventions targeting more than one risk factor, including environmental adaptation; balance, transfer, strength and gait training; reduction or modification of medications; management of visual deficits; and management of postural hypotension and other medical problems are most effective in reducing falls.

Sources:

1. Data sources: NYC DOHMH Bureau of Vital Statistics 2005-2009 data, (ICD-10 codes W00-19); NYS Statewide Planning and Research Cooperative System, 2005-2009 data; live discharges (ICD-9 codes E880-E888); WISQARS Cost of Injury Reports, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, CDC, 2005 data
2. Links to other NYC DOHMH injury surveillance and prevention resources: [Injury Surveillance and Prevention Program](#); [Preventing Falls in Older Adults](#); [Ten Leading Causes of Death](#); [Ten Leading Causes of Injury Death](#); [Maps of Older Adult Deaths and Hospitalizations due to Falls in New York City, 2002-2006](#).