Talking with your Patient about Falls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you hear:</th>
<th>You can say:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Precontemplation Stage</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falling is just a matter of bad luck.</td>
<td>As we age, falls are more likely for many reasons, including changes in our balance and how we walk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Contemplation Stage** | |
| My friend down the street fell and ended up in a nursing home. | Preventing falls can prevent broken hips & help you stay independent. |

| **Preparation Stage** | |
| I’m worried about falling. Do you think there’s anything I can do to keep from falling? | Let’s look at some factors that may make you likely to fall & talk about what you could do about one or two of them. |

| **Action Stage** | |
| I know a fall can be serious. What can I do to keep from falling and stay independent? | I’m going to fill out a referral form for a specialist who can help you improve your balance. |

Key Facts about Falls:
- 1/3 of older adults (age 65+) fall each year.
- Many patients who have fallen do not talk about it.

This is What You Can Do:

**RITUAL:**
- Review self-assessment brochure
- Identify risk factors
- Test gait & balance
- Undertake multifactorial assessment
- Apply interventions
- Later, follow-up

For more information, go to: www.cdc.gov/injury/STEADI

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Injury Prevention and Control

2015

CS256024A
Key Steps for Fall Prevention

1. Be proactive—ask all patients 65+ if they’ve fallen in the past year.
2. Identify & address fall risk factors:
   • Lower body weakness
   • Gait and balance problems
   • Psychoactive medications
   • Postural dizziness
   • Poor vision
   • Problems with feet and/or shoes
   • Home safety
3. Refer as needed to specialists or community programs.
4. Follow-up with patient within 30 days.

Key Fall Interventions

- Educate patient
- Enhance strength & balance
- Modify medications
- Manage hypotension
- Supplement vitamin D +/- calcium
- Address foot problems
- Optimize vision
- Optimize home safety

Algorithm for Fall Risk Assessment & Interventions