

# Pharmacists can help reduce older adult falls.

Certain medications increase the risk of falls among adults aged 65 and older.

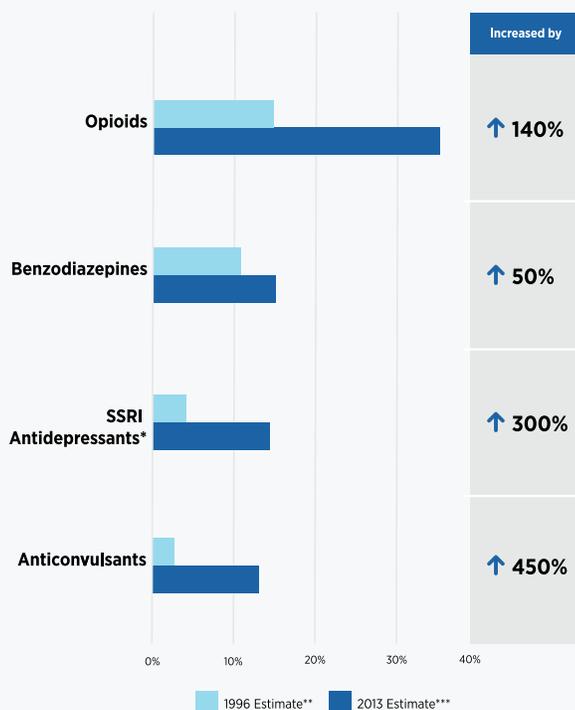
Psychoactive medications may cause side effects that increase the risk of falls by causing vision disturbances, orthostatic hypotension, confusion, and sleepiness.

In 2013, over 50% of Medicare beneficiaries used a psychoactive medication. During the year,

**30%** used one psychoactive medication class      **15%** used two psychoactive medication classes      **9%** used three or more psychoactive medication classes

## Psychoactive medication use has increased over time.

Comparison of Psychoactive Medication Use in Community-dwelling Older Americans between 1996 and 2013



Between 1996 and 2013, tricyclic antidepressant use in older adults decreased by 25%.

\* Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitor Antidepressants. \*\* Estimate derived from Moxey E et al. Prescription drug use in the elderly: a descriptive analysis. *Health Care Financ Rev.* 2003; 24(4):127-41. \*\*\* Source: Haddad YK, et. al., *Psychoactive Medication Use among Older Community-Dwelling Americans*, Journal of the American Pharmacists Association (2019)

## Pharmacists can help.

Older adults report not knowing that medications can increase their fall risk, but they are willing to discuss and make changes to reduce their risk. As medication experts, you have an opportunity to help reduce fall risk.

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**STEP 1:**  
Screen patient for fall risk at pharmacy.
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**STEP 2:**  
Assess older adult's medications.
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**STEP 3:**  
Coordinate care by sharing information with patient and providers.



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



STEADI-R<sub>x</sub> contains tools and resources for pharmacists on how to screen, assess, and coordinate care to reduce fall risk. Learn more about STEADI-R<sub>x</sub> at: [www.cdc.gov/steadi](http://www.cdc.gov/steadi).