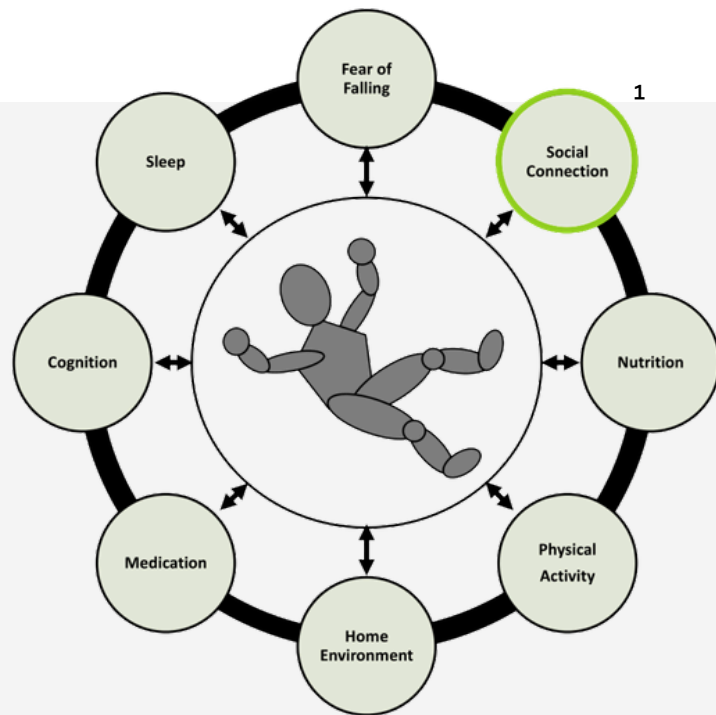


The Role of Social Connection in Fall Prevention

Increased social connection = increased fall resiliency

People who are socially connected are more likely to stay active and engage in healthy behaviors; maintain strength, balance and mobility; access services; and receive support that reduces fall risk. These connections can contribute to better physical and mental health and overall well-being.



Increased fall resiliency = increased social connection

As we age, those of us who feel confident, maintain our independence, and develop physical resilience are more likely to seek out and maintain social relationships.

Fall prevention programs can reduce feelings of loneliness

Research shows that older adults who reported feeling lonely before participating in a fall prevention program experienced a significant reduction in loneliness after completing the program.²

Connecting the Dots...

Loneliness and social isolation are risk factors for falls

After a fall, an injury or fear of falling may cause us to limit activities, avoid things we enjoy, and become less active and confident. Over time, this can lead to loneliness and less connection to friends, family and community support. Reduced activity may also increase fall risk by contributing to other risk factors, such as loss of balance and strength, changes in mental or cognitive health, or substance use.¹



Social connection is important as we age

Staying connected can help us stay healthy and steady. Some of the health benefits of social connection include improved physical, mental, and cognitive health. These benefits reduce our risk of experiencing a fall and increase our resiliency overall.³

Encouraging Older Adults to Stay Connected

Create intentional opportunities for older adults to connect with others through social activities, group programs, and community resources. Offer evidence-based fall prevention programs, such as [Stepping On](#) and [Pisando Fuerte](#), which reduce fall risk and foster meaningful relationships, confidence and a sense of belonging.

1. Smith, M. L., & Ory, M. G. (2023). Multi-directional nature of falls among older adults: A rationale for prevention and management. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 11, 1117863. [doi:10.3389/fpubh.2023.1117863](https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2023.1117863)
2. Smith, Matthew Lee, and Gang Han. "Effectiveness of evidence-based fall prevention programs to reduce loneliness in the United States." *Frontiers in public health* vol. 12 1459225. 6 Sep. 2024, [doi:10.3389/fpubh.2024.1459225](https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2024.1459225)
3. Office of the Surgeon General. (2023). Our epidemic of loneliness and isolation: The U.S. Surgeon General's advisory on the healing effects of social connection and community. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.