

## SENIORS

# Preventing Senior Falls Starts in the Bathroom

NewsUSA

(NU) - More than one in three seniors over age 65 fall each year, and the National Institute on Aging (NIA) says 80 percent of these falls are in the bathroom. Due to the multitude of unforgiving and slippery surfaces, bathrooms are very hazardous for the home.

Knowing how to get in and out of tubs and showers properly and equipping homes with necessary safety precautions can reduce senior falls, keep them out of the emergency room and possibly extend their life.

According to research from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1.6 million older adults seek emergency care each year for fall-related injuries, fractures or head trauma. In addition to potentially losing their independence, seniors 65 years old and up have a 25 percent chance of dying within six months to a year if they fall and break a hip.

Seniors are vulnerable to falls for many reasons – eyesight and reflexes aren't as razor-sharp as they used to be, not to mention the balance issues posed by diabetes, heart disease, thyroid conditions and various medications.

One of the most effective ways to preserve balance is to stay active with an exercise regimen. Ask your doctor about exercises designed to improve balance, stability and overall mobility, such as moderate yoga.

But, another preventative method recommended by physicians is installing a shower or tub built around the unique needs of elderly adults. For example, Safe Step Tub Walk-In Tub Company's new walk-in shower has a foldable



**Statistics say 80 percent of senior falls occur in the bathroom.**

chair, flexible shower wand, grab bars, ultra-low step up and other senior-friendly features. And since the cost of retirement is high for many seniors, installation is included in the price.

To find out more about these showers and walk-in tubs or to request a free brochure and DVD, visit [www.safesteptub.com/news](http://www.safesteptub.com/news)

Besides a customized shower or bath, NIA and the American Geriatrics Society advise the following bathroom safety precautions for seniors:

- Non-slip rubber mats in front of sink, toilet and shower/bath.
- Grab bars inside and outside of shower/bath and on either side of the toilet (these are much stronger than towel racks, which aren't meant to support weight).
- Bright lights that are easily accessible.