

Stay Strong, Stay Independent: Rethinking Fall Prevention



By Esther Conteh, APRN, MSN, PCC, Aug 27, 2026

September is **Falls Prevention Month**, a reminder to prepare our bodies for the cold months ahead. Building strength, improving balance, and addressing health concerns now can help keep you active and independent year-round. Whether heading outside on an icy morning or moving through our home after dark, a little preparation can go a long way to helping us feel safer.

One common misconception is that older adults should become less active to avoid falling. However, regular movement helps preserve strength and balance, reduce fall risk, and boost confidence, helping you continue living independently. And don't ignore a fall or even a near-fall. It could be an early warning sign of a treatable health issue, so tell your healthcare provider.

STAY ACTIVE.

Whether strolling along the waterfront, tending a garden, or cheering on grandchildren at soccer games, walking, strength training, Tai Chi, and balance exercises help maintain strength and stability required for everyday activities.

PAY ATTENTION TO WARNING SIGNS.

Vision changes, medication side effects, low blood pressure, and balance problems can increase the risk of falls. Promptly report any unsteadiness, weakness, or dizziness rather than waiting until your next checkup.

HOME SAFETY.

Wear supportive shoes, improve lighting, remove clutter from walkways, keep essentials within easy reach, and ask your doctor or pharmacist to review medications that may cause dizziness.

Small steps today can help you stay active, confident, and independent tomorrow so you can continue enjoying everything Western New York has to offer.

VNS Health offers integrated health plans to help older New Yorkers live, age, and recover in the comfort of their homes and communities. Learn more at vnshealthplans.org. Esther Conteh, APRN, MSN, PCC, is Vice President of Care Management at VNS Health's Health Plans.

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