



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**NORTH SUBURBAN  
YMCA**  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **YMCA Offers Expertise in Falls Prevention for Older Adults**

### ***Don't Let a Fear of Falls Hold You Back***

**Northbrook, IL: September 2017** -- Each year on the first day of Fall, national organizations from the Falls Free Coalition and the National Council on Aging (NCOA) join together for National Falls Prevention Awareness Day, a day of action to help raise awareness and prevention of falls. The North Suburban YMCA supports this initiative, reaching out to raise awareness of the danger of falls among older adults, and providing support to help prevent them not just during the fall season but year round.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), an older adult in the U.S. is treated in the ER for a fall-related injury every 14 seconds and dies from a fall-related injury every 29 minutes. Additionally, falls put an immense strain on the health care system, with the financial toll expected to reach \$67.7 billion by 2020. The good news is falls are preventable, and the first step to prevention is understanding risk. With a focus on healthy aging, the Y is committed to helping older adults learn their fall risk and access programs that can help them reduce their risk for falls.

“Falling and fear of falling may can prevent older adults from staying active, which leads to reduced mobility and diminished quality of life. It’s a vicious cycle that actually increases their risk of falling,” says Karen Brownlee, Adult Programs Coordinator at the NSYMCA. “The good news is that falls are highly preventable, and help is available for older adults and their families who want to get active but don’t know how.”

As a leading community-based organization dedicated to improving the nation’s health, the NSYMCA encourages older adults to learn their risk for falls by taking a simple [assessment test](#). Factors including poor balance, leg weakness, medications, and even emotional well-being can increase the risk of falling, and should be discussed with your doctor.

Once risk is assessed, the NSYMCA offers a variety of programs that help older adults feel strong, steady and safe. Classes like Balance for Walking, Basic Cardio, Yoga for Optimal Aging, Chair Yoga, and Improve Your Balance are all specially designed with older adults in mind, reducing the risk of falls by enhancing balance, muscle strength, and mobility. Detailed information and schedules for these programs can be found in the Adult Fitness section of the NSYMCA program guide at [NSYMCA.org](http://NSYMCA.org).

The CDC suggests these basic lifestyle and safety changes to help reduce risk or prevent falls:

- Begin an exercise program to improve your leg strength & balance.

- Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review your medicines.
- Get annual eye check-ups and update your eyeglasses.
- Make your home safer by:
  - Removing clutter and tripping hazards.
  - Putting railings on all stairs and adding grab bars in the bathroom.
  - Installing proper lighting, especially on stairs.

To learn more about the North Suburban YMCA's programs for improving strength and balance, contact Karen Brownlee at [kbrownlee@nsymca.org](mailto:kbrownlee@nsymca.org) or call 847 272 7250.

### **About the [North Suburban YMCA](#)**

The North Suburban YMCA serves 15 northern suburbs of Chicago, and for over 48 years has provided programs and services that address youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility every day. Working together for good is who we are: An association of people united in a common effort to help individuals become healthier, more connected, and confident. There is no other nonprofit quite like the Y: We have the national and local presence and partnerships to not just promise, but deliver, positive change, making sure that everyone, regardless of age, income or background has the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive. For more information, visit [nsymca.org](http://nsymca.org)



*Photo Caption: Yoga and other wellness classes can improve the strength and balance of older adults, and help prevent dangerous falls.*