



## Why Safe Falling Training

- Falls are the leading cause of injuries for older Americans.
- Falls generate enormous economic and personal costs and threaten seniors' safety and independence.
- Awareness and lifestyle adjustments can reduce the number of falls and reduce the potential for significant injury.

## What does Safe Falling mean?

- Falling to protect your head from injury.
- Falling to prevent or reduce significant injury such as broken hips, pelvis, arms or shoulder.

***Falling is not an inevitable result of aging!***

## Statistics (from U.S. Center for Disease Control website)

- 30-40% of seniors 65+ fall each year; 1 out of 5 falls cause a serious injury such as broken bones or a head injury.
- Every 11 seconds an older adult is seen in an emergency department for a fall-related injury.
- Every 19 minutes a senior dies from a fall.
- Each year, about 3 million older people are treated in emergency departments for fall injuries, including over 800,000 hospitalizations and more than 27,000 deaths.
- In Hawai'i there are 2,600 fall related accidents each year compared to 900 auto accident related injuries.
- 90% of all hip fractures each year are due to falls.
  - Only 25% of hip fracture patients make a full recovery.
  - 40% will require nursing home care.
  - 50% will need a cane or walker.
  - 15-25% will die within a year.

***The safest fall is the fall that never happens!***

***To ensure that we reduce our risk of falling, the basic formula is ... ABC.***

## Awareness

- Focus on walking. ***Walking is a dangerous activity.***
- Develop a different mindset to walking. Observe surroundings, practice 15 feet and 5 feet observation rule.
- Walk "heel to toe".
- Lift your legs as you walk.
- Land on your heel, and push-off with your toes.

## Balance

Exercise to develop the muscles in all your limbs through the use of techniques such as diaphragmatic breathing, tai chi, yoga, balance training, strength training, flexibility training, and core training.

## Control

- Take the safer path regardless of whether it takes longer or if you have to make multiple trips.
- Use hand rails.
- Install and use handrails in the home.
- Remove anything that can lead to tripping or falling e.g., loose rugs, things in hallways or on the floor.

## How to fall:

- Protect your face (Keep your chin to skin!)
- DO NOT BRACE with your hands! You must control the fall; don't let the fall control you!
- Lower your hips getting as close to the ground as possible.
- REACH for the ground with one hand extended in front of the other, head tucked in or chin to your chest.
- Extend your arms and slide forward, lowering your hip as you do so.
- Rotate your hip to contact the side of your calf, thigh, and then buttocks to the ground, and roll.



KUPUNA AIKIDO  
HAWAII

## More information:

Kupuna Aikido is an IRC §501(c)(3) tax exempt nonprofit organization incorporated in the State of Hawai'i. In addition to presentations, Kupuna Aikido offers groups weekly sessions of 50 minutes each, lasting 8 weeks. The program progresses from awareness and stretching exercises to **realistic falling methods**. More Information is available at [www.kupunaaikido.org](http://www.kupunaaikido.org).