

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

Watch your step—November is Falls Prevention Month

November is Falls Prevention Month, and Alberta Blue Cross has partnered with the Alberta Injury Prevention Centre to encourage Albertans to take steps to prevent fall-related injuries as part of the annual Finding Balance campaign.

According to the Injury Prevention Centre, falls are the leading cause of injury among older adults. The older we get, the greater the risk of falling becomes. Our bodies naturally change with age, and these changes affect the way we feel and move¹.

Finding Balance campaign is an educational program and public awareness campaign to inform and empower older Albertans to stay independent and prevent falls. As a champion for wellbeing for Albertans, Alberta Blue Cross has assumed an active role in promoting injury prevention by sponsoring the campaign. Support from Alberta Blue Cross helps raise the profile of preventing injuries as an important component of life-long health and wellness.

"With the arrival of winter, the streets, sidewalks and steps we use daily become ice-coated obstacle courses," says Brian Geislinger, senior vice-president of Corporate Relations and Community Engagement with Alberta Blue Cross. "With this in mind, we encourage everyone—particularly older adults—to take precautions to prevent falls and stay safe."

"Falls are something many of us experience in our lives and can have a significant impact on the lifestyle and independence of an older adult," adds Kathy Belton, director of the Injury Prevention Centre. "It's important to bring attention and awareness to falls prevention to empower older adults to stay independent and prevent falls."

Every year, 1 in 3 older Albertans will fall² but there are things you can do to prevent falling. Adapting the way you walk on icy, snow-covered surfaces can help you prevent a fall. Follow these tips from the Injury Prevention Centre:

- Take your time and avoid rushing.
- Wear shoes or boots with a wide, flat heel.
- Choose footwear with soles that stay flexible in the cold.
- Make sure footwear has the proper amount of grip - not too much and not too little.
- Wear ice grips over your shoes or boots to get better grip. Remove ice grips when indoors because they can be slippery.
- If you use a cane, put a retractable ice pick on the end of it.

- Carry a small bag or container of sand to sprinkle on icy spots you cannot avoid.
- Keep your hands free for gripping handrails or supports.
- **Walk like a penguin**—bend slightly and walk flat-footed with your feet pointed out slightly like a penguin. Take shorter, shuffle-like steps, keep your arms at your sides (not in your pockets) and go S-L-O-W-L-Y.

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About Alberta Blue Cross

As the largest provider of health benefits in Alberta, we believe we have the potential and responsibility to impact people’s lives for the better. We believe all communities should thrive, and we are committed to serving as a champion for wellness by promoting the health of Albertans.

About Injury Prevention Centre

The Injury Prevention Centre has supported organizations, communities and individuals to take actions to reduce their risk of injury for over 20 years in Alberta. By focusing on preventing injuries, we save lives and keep Albertans out of emergency rooms and hospital beds. We work as connectors, providers and leaders committed to our vision of ensuring that “Albertans work and play hard, free from life-limiting injuries.”

For more information, please contact Sharmin Hislop, director of Corporate Communications, Alberta Blue Cross at shislop@ab.bluecross.ca or 780-231-6356 or Kathy Belton, director, Injury Prevention Centre at kbelton@ualberta.ca or 780-719-2399.

¹ [November Falls Prevention Month Backgrounder \(findingbalancealberta.ca\)](#)

² [FB_Winter_Walking_2023.cdr \(findingbalancealberta.ca\)](#)

