

# Patient Falls: 4 Statistics Every Healthcare Professional Should Know

Research shows that [684,000 individuals](#) around the globe die each year from preventable [patient falls](#). It's hardly surprising that providers and facilities managers alike are prioritizing fall management in their strategies and care plans.

It's crucial for healthcare professionals to stay current on fall management research and best practices. Let's review several insights that can help improve outcomes.

## Top 4 Statistics on Patient Falls

### 1. Patient falls are the second leading cause of death worldwide.

[The World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) cites falls as the second leading cause of death yearly, after automobile accidents. The WHO acknowledges that many of these falls occur in underdeveloped nations and communities but emphasizes that one of the primary causes is a lack of preventative measures.

[Universal fall precautions](#) can help prevent patient falls. They are "universal" because they apply to all patients regardless of fall risk. Universal fall precautions revolve

around keeping the patient's environment safe and comfortable.

## **2. More than 11,000 patients in American hospitals die because of falls every year.**

According to the [National Library of Medicine](#), 11,000 hospital patients in America experience fatal falls every year. Some of these fatalities can be ascribed to unclear facility fall standards, while others are caused by patients staying in facilities for brief periods.

More extended stays and more extensive care and rehabilitation may be required for some patients, whereas taking the appropriate precautions and improving communication might reduce the numbers for others. Also, medications, health issues, and normal aging can increase the likelihood that a patient will fall.

## **3. More than 39% of fatal falls were due to the physical environment.**

[The Joint Commission](#) examined 538 falls that resulted in fatalities or permanently disabling injuries and found that 209, or 39%, were environmental-related. Beds, carpets, and floors all contributed to falls, whereas lower beds and less slick flooring reduced the risk of patient falls and improved hospital outcomes.

Without adding to the cognitive and physical strain on facility staff and caregivers, fall management, equipment

management, and fall prevention strategies can help keep patients safe.

## **4. 35-45% of patient falls result in injury.**

Between 35 and 45 percent of patients who fall at a facility will experience an injury, according to research from the [Joint Commission Center for Transforming Healthcare](#). Their stay extends their recuperation period by 6-7 days. Each fall is pricey, costing **\$14,000** for every accident.

Patients who fall once are more likely to fall again in a more vulnerable state. Reducing patient falls can assist in reallocating funding to other programs and improve a facility's reputation.

## **What Can Be Done?**

A high ratio of patient falls indicates that a facility has at least one of the following issues:

- Unclear fall guidelines
- Lack of communication among staff
- Outdated equipment
- Complex requirements that make preventing patient falls difficult and time-consuming
- Too many risky environmental factors like slippery floors or missing bars in showers

Any fall management program must include an equipment management solution. This system increases the use of equipment and technologies that aid in the safe

ambulation and transfer of patients in skilled nursing facilities. In turn, it lessens the likelihood of patient falls and the negative consequences they may bring about.