

# Hearing Loss & Falls

Latest researches shows that acquired hearing loss is linked to a host of other health conditions, including cognitive decline, heart disease, diabetes and depression. One area of most importance is the connection between hearing loss and falling.



A recent study done by Johns Hopkins School of Medicine found that older adults with a mild hearing loss were nearly three times more likely to have a history of falling. Furthermore, every additional 10-decibels of hearing loss increased the chances of falling by 140%.

## CAN HEARING AIDS HELP?

Some initial research suggests that hearing aids can provide auditory reference points (or landmarks) to help maintain balance. It's similar to using your eyes to know where you are in space. If you turn the lights out, you may sway some and have trouble knowing where you are compared to things around you. The

same might be true for hearing – “opening your ears” using hearing aids may make you more alert and provide information to aid in maintaining balance. Further large-scale studies on the link between hearing loss and accidental falls are ongoing.

## Why does all of this matter?

According to the World Health Organization, falls are the second leading cause of accidental or unintentional injury deaths worldwide and adults older than 60 years of age suffer the greatest number of fatal falls. In Canada, falls remain the leading cause of injury-related hospitalizations among Canadian seniors, and between 20% and 30% of seniors fall each year.

## The good news is that falls are preventable.

Talk to your audiologist about your hearing health.

**Aswin Kuttuva, MSc., RAUD, RHIP**  
Audiologist & Owner  
[www.myhearcare.ca](http://www.myhearcare.ca)



## BETTER HEARING

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