

UNINTENTIONAL FALL-RELATED INJURY IN CONNECTICUT A FACT SHEET – 2021 UPDATE

INJURY AND VIOLENCE SURVEILLANCE UNIT • OCTOBER 2022

What We Know About Fall-Related Injury in Connecticut:

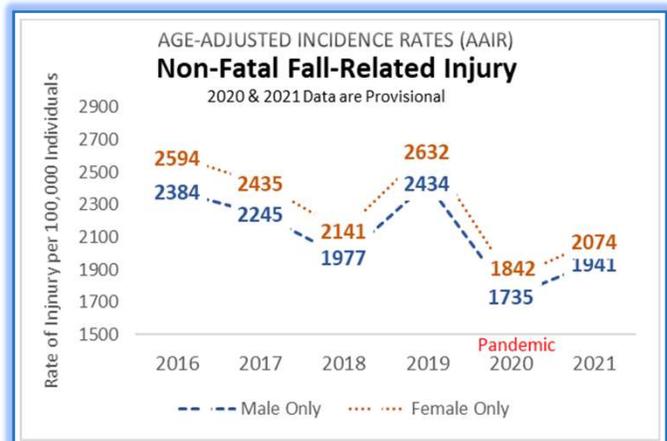
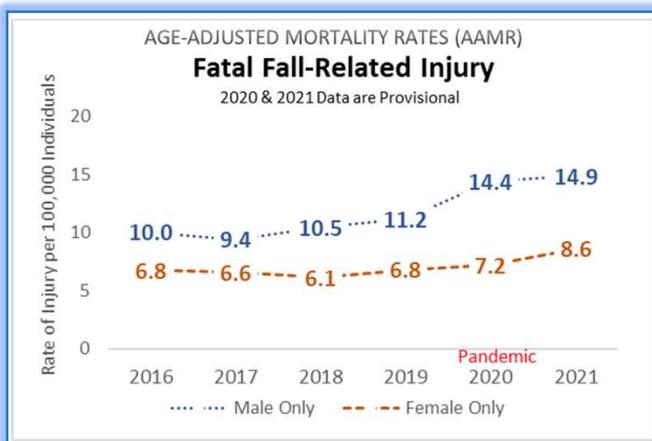
Unintentional fall-related injury is the leading cause of non-fatal injury in Connecticut, affecting people of all ages. High-risk populations include children under 5 years of age, adult minorities, and people over 65. Falls are also the leading cause of fatal injuries for people over 65, contributing to serious head injuries, the 2nd leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries for that older population.

Older adults are nearly 5 times more likely to die from a fall than their younger counterparts. More than 50% of these fatal falls co-occurred with a serious head injury and more than 43% of older-adult hospital admissions co-occurred with a hip fracture. CDC estimated the injury-related medical, work loss, and quality of life costs in Connecticut exceeded one trillion dollars in 2020; \$2 billion from deaths, \$374 billion from hospital admissions, and \$648 billion from emergency department treatment and release.

It is too soon to tell how the pandemic years of 2020 and 2021 may have contributed to changes in current trends for unintentional falls and fall-related injuries. We do know the total number of injury records reported by Connecticut hospitals dropped 24% from 2019 to 2020.

Key Points:

- In 2021, approximately 85% of fall-related deaths and 70% of fall-related hospital admissions occurred among Connecticut residents 65 years of age and older.
- Falls often occur with serious complications such as traumatic brain injuries and bone fractures that cause incapacitation, requiring intensive care and prolonged recovery time.
- Blacks and Hispanics carry the highest burden of risk for non-fatal, fall-related injury, excluding the very young (under 5) and those over 65.

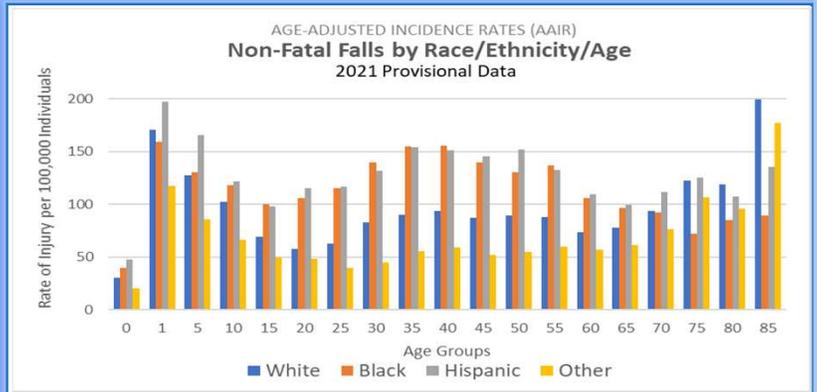
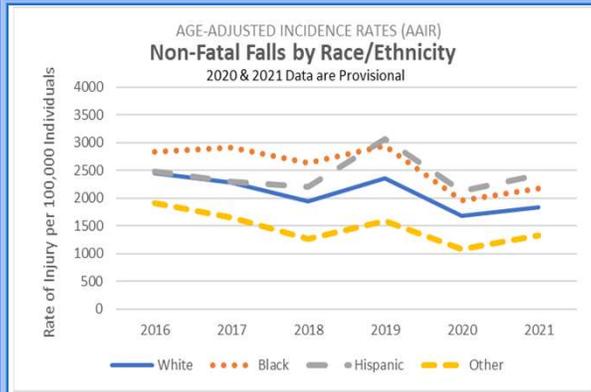
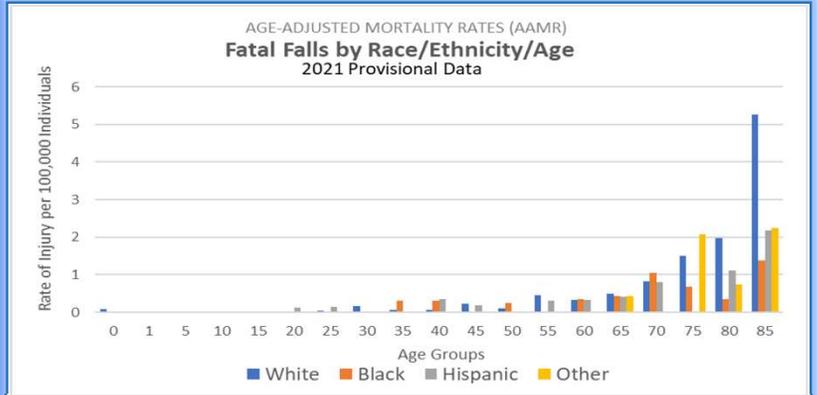
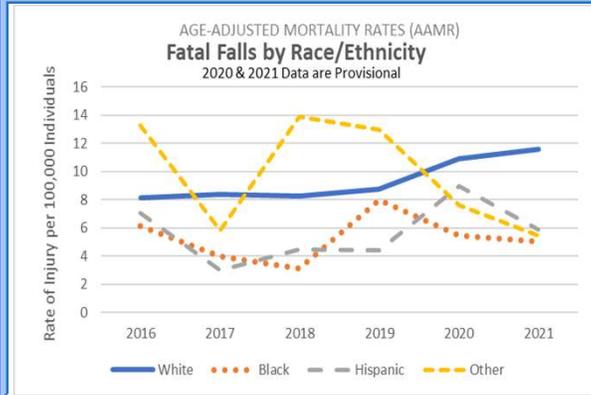


Data Sources: Fatalities reported from CT Vital Records data and Non-Fatalities reported from Connecticut Hospital Discharge data

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What You Can Do to Prevent Falls

- Make your home safer by reducing tripping hazards, using safety gates on stairways, putting anti-slip strips in bathtubs and showers, buying non-slip carpets or mats, installing handrails or grab bars, and by providing adequate lighting in dark places.
- Get regular exercise to improve muscle strength and balance.
- Wear proper footwear.
- Contact your local Senior Center, YMCA, Visiting Nurse Association, or the Connecticut Health Living Collective to locate a falls prevention program near you.
- Get your vision and hearing checked at least once a year.
- Ask your doctor or healthcare provider to evaluate your risk for falling and to review your medicines for those that can make you drowsy.