

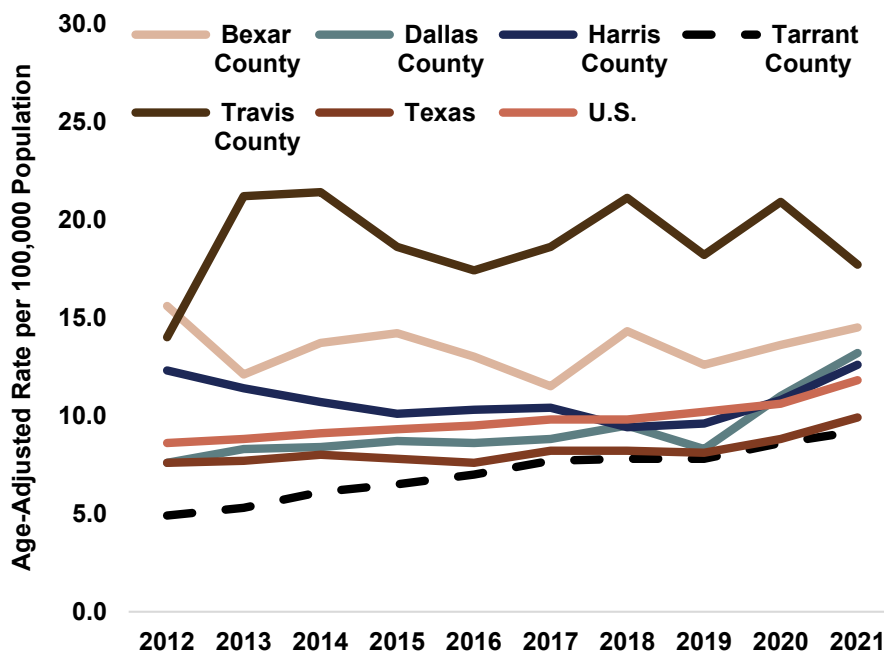
TARRANT COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DATA BRIEF



FALL-RELATED INJURIES AND DEATHS IN TARRANT COUNTY

Fall: When someone unintentionally comes to rest on the ground, floor, or other lower level. Anyone can experience a fall, but **older adults are at greatest risk**. While falls don't always cause injuries, certain severe injuries (hip fractures and traumatic brain injuries) can lead to long-term disability or death. Falls can be non-fatal or fatal in outcome, but they are preventable and certain measures can reduce someone's risk of falling. The **fear of falling creates a cycle of inactivity**, which leads to weaker muscles and poor balance, and then increases the risk of falling. **Stopping this cycle is critical when preventing falls.**

Figure 1. Fall mortality rates by geographic location, 2012-2021

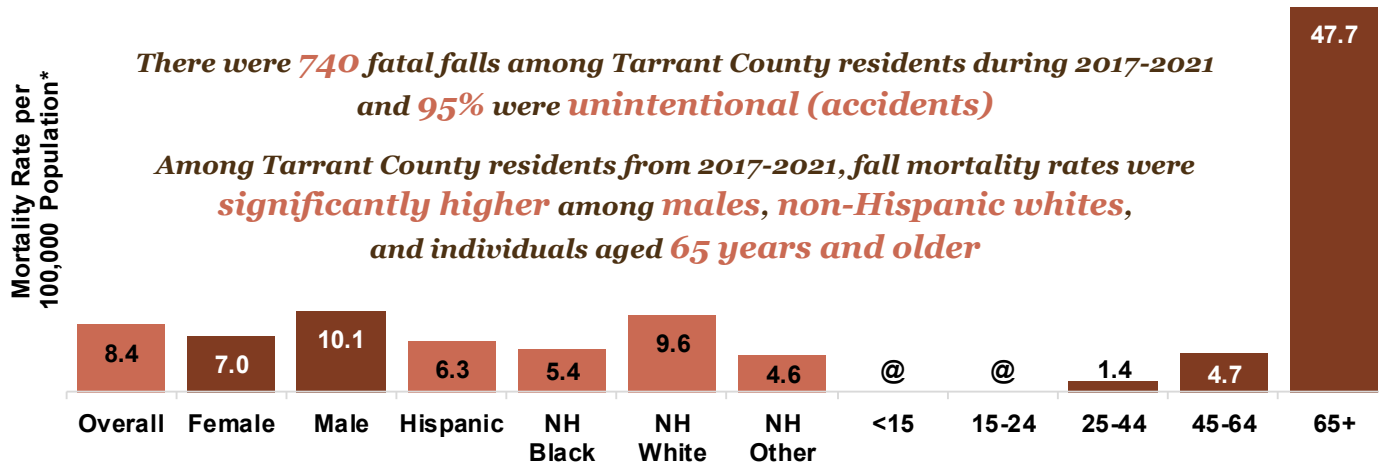


From 2018-2021, falls were the **leading cause of unintentional injury death** among Tarrant County residents aged 65 years and older



Tarrant County had a **significant increase** in fall mortality rates from 2012 to 2021, as did Dallas County, Texas, and the U.S.


Figure 2. Tarrant County fall mortality rates by gender, race/ethnicity, and age group (in years), 2017-2021



There were **740** fatal falls among Tarrant County residents during 2017-2021 and **95%** were **unintentional (accidents)**

Among Tarrant County residents from 2017-2021, fall mortality rates were **significantly higher** among **males, non-Hispanic whites, and individuals aged 65 years and older**

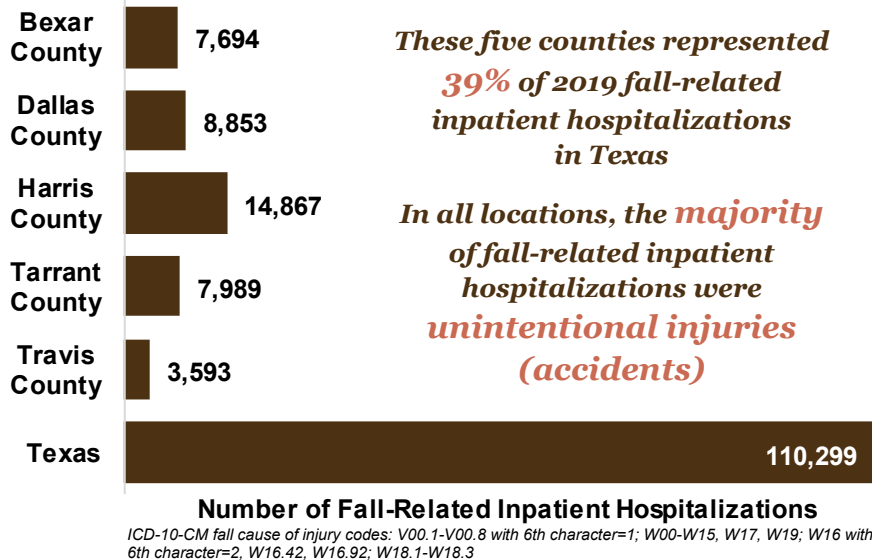
* Age-adjusted rate per 100,000 population for Tarrant County overall, gender, and race/ethnicity; * Age-specific rate per 100,000 population for age groups; @ = unstable rate; NH = non-Hispanic; All significant differences detected at the 95% confidence level; Data sources: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, World Health Organization; Data Brief provided by: Division of Epidemiology and Health Information



Factors that increase fall risk:

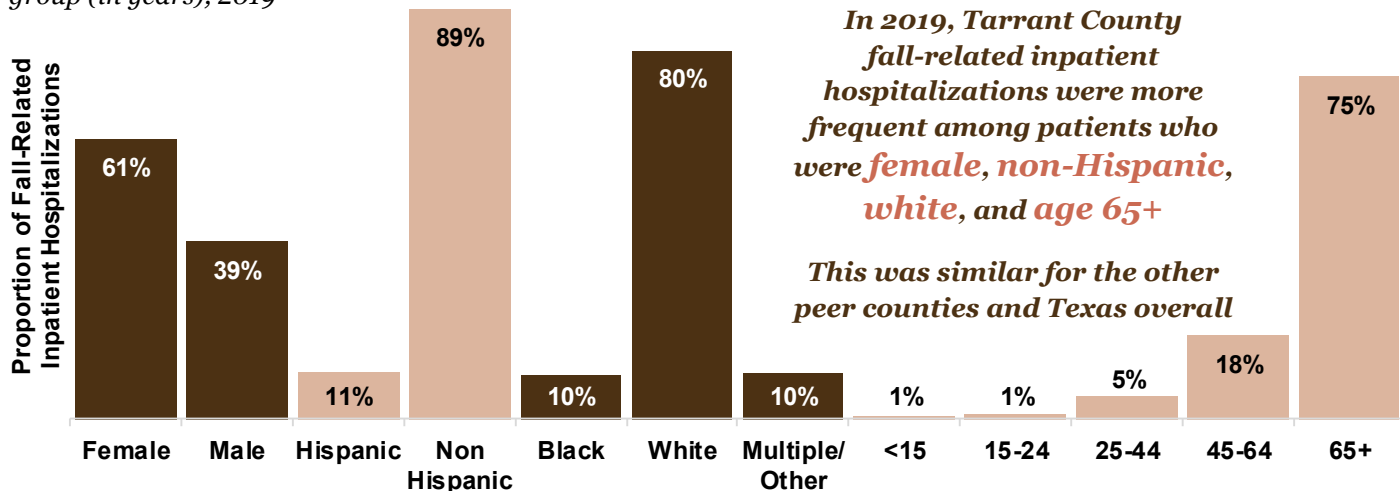
- **Environment/Home** - clutter, throw rugs, poor lighting, unsafe foot wear, unstable furniture, wet or uneven floors, missing/ineffective safety equipment, hazardous working conditions (heights), etc.
- **Personal Traits** - age, fall history, limited physical activity, chronic health conditions, difficulties with balance, mobility, vision, hearing, or cognition, Vitamin D deficiency, medication/drugs and their side effects, alcohol consumption, risk taking behaviors, etc.

Figure 3. Fall-related inpatient hospitalizations by geographic location, 2019



In 2020, **1 in 5** Tarrant County residents aged 45 years and older reported that they had experienced a **fall** in the last **12 months**

Figure 4. Proportion of Tarrant County fall-related inpatient hospitalizations by gender, ethnicity, race, and age group (in years), 2019



Fall Prevention Education and Resources

Children
[safekids.org/falls]
[safekids.org/tip/falls-prevention-tips]

Workers
[cdc.gov/niosh/topics/falls/]
[nsc.org/workplace/safety-topics/slips-trips-and-falls/slips-trips-and-falls-home]
[osha.gov/fall-protection/]

Older Adults

Local:
[sixtyandbetter.org]
[tarrantcountyadrc.org]
[tarrantcountytx.gov/en/public-health/family-health-services/chronic-disease-prevention/falls-prevention.html]

State:
[hhs.texas.gov/providers/long-term-care-providers/nursing-facilities-nf/quality-monitoring-program/evidence-based-best-practices/fall-prevention-management]
[hhs.texas.gov/services/health/wellness/texercise]
[homemods.org/directory-state/tx/]

National:
[cdc.gov/falls/index.html]
[cdc.gov/steady/index.html]
[cdc.gov/stillgoingstrong/index.html]
[ncoa.org/older-adults/health/prevention/falls-prevention]

How older adults can prevent falls:

- 1) Find a balance or exercise program
- 2) Talk to your doctor
- 3) Review your medications
- 4) Get your vision and hearing checked
- 5) Keep your home safe
- 6) Talk with your family

Hospitalization data based on county of residence; Hospitalization data collect ethnicity and race categories separately; Data sources: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) 2020, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Council on Aging, Texas Department of State Health Services; Data Brief provided by: Division of Epidemiology and Health Information