

# Falls Among Adults age 65 and Older in the Denver Metro Area\*

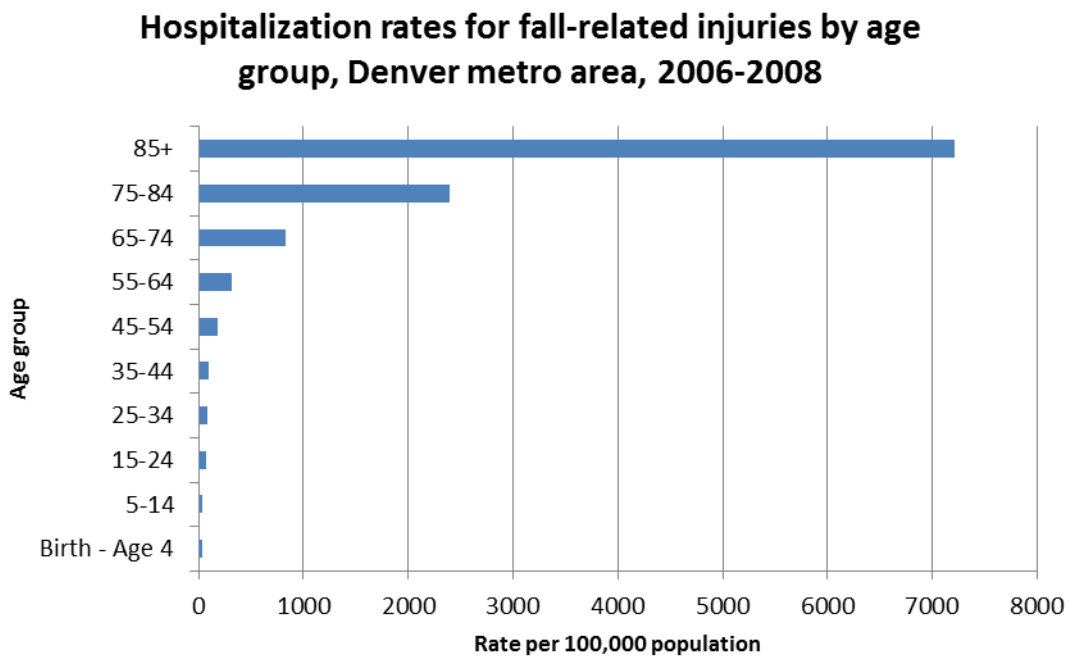
Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas and Jefferson Counties

## How big is the problem in the Denver metro area?

- The rates of fall-related hospitalizations have increased over the past 10 years.
- Recent figures show that on average, 4,500 Denver metro area residents age 65 and older are hospitalized each year with fall-related injuries. This number has increased as the older adult population continues to grow. From 1990-2008, the 65 and older population in the Denver metro area has grown 42% from 150,000 to 220,000 residents. An even greater number of older adults are seen in an emergency department for a fall-related injury.
- Among older adults, falls are the leading cause of injury deaths. Of all the fall-related injury deaths in the Denver metro area over the past 10 years, 85% were to people aged 65 or older.

## Who is at risk?

- Falls do not have to occur from a height to be injurious. The most common type of fall-related injury hospitalization among older adults is slipping, tripping, or stumbling on the same level.
- The risk of requiring hospitalization for a fall-related injury increases with age. Adults age 65 and older accounted for 63% of the fall-related hospitalizations in the Denver metro area from 2006-2008. During this same time period, this age-group only accounted for 9% of the total population in the Denver metro area.
- Adults age 85 and older are at greatest risk (Figure 1).



\*All data obtained from the Colorado Health Information Dataset, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Updated 9/24/2010