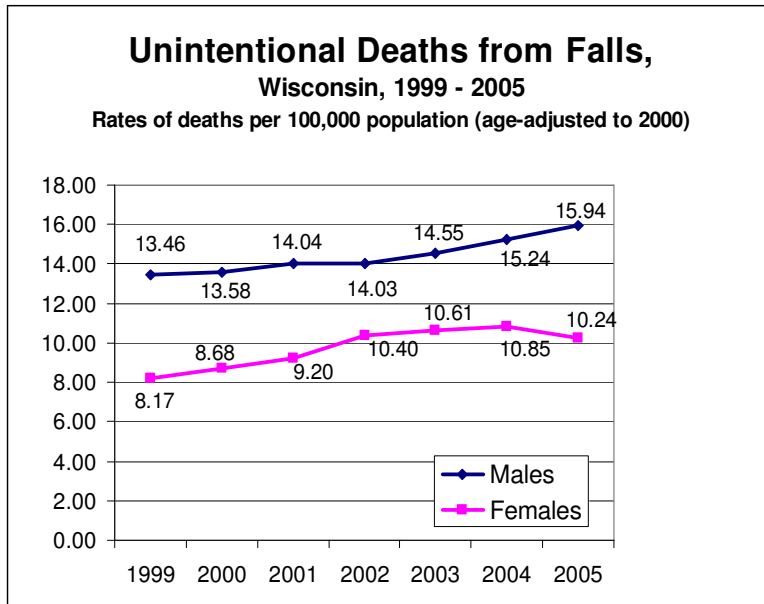


WISCONSIN DEATHS CAUSED BY FALLS

Fall prevention is a major goal for Wisconsin, because falls cause many serious injuries and deaths each year. This chart shows the growing rate of deaths from unintentionally falling or from complications related to an unintentional fall.



SOURCE: Center for Disease Control Injury Mortality Data

HIGH RANK, BAD SCORE...

Wisconsin ranks very high nationally in numbers of deaths per 100,000 population. This table shows rates of death from falls for people of all ages and both sexes. Although some other top-rankers are northern states, our infamous ice doesn't explain the whole problem, since other equally icy states rank especially low.

AGE AND SEX MATTER!

As this chart shows, men suffer fatal falls more often than women. Also, older people die from falls more often than do younger people. In Wisconsin, 88.7 percent of those who die from falls are age 65 and older (Wisconsin Bureau of Health Information and Policy, 2007).

NOTE: The numbers for this handout have been age-adjusted, which helps to compensate for the growing proportion of the population that is old. This is important because older people suffer more falls and are more likely to die from fall-related injuries than are younger people.

THE TOP TEN, 2005

States with the highest rates of deaths from falls (Source: CDC Injury Mortality Data, 2005)

State	Number of Deaths	Death Rate*	State Rank
New Mexico	271	14.22	1
Wisconsin	809	12.67	2
Vermont	87	12.46	3
South Dakota	115	11.46	4
Arizona	700	11.37	5
Minnesota	582	10.35	6
Montana	114	10.23	7
Rhode Island	139	10.22	8
Colorado	390	9.98	9
Oregon	379	9.33	10

* Rate is deaths per 100,000 persons, age-adjusted

FALLS IN CONTEXT:

All of these data are originally from state death records. Coroners and medical examiners, who fill out the death certificate, report a fall as the cause of death when it is "the disease or injury that set in motion the chain of morbid events leading to death" (CDC, 1999). Overall, falls account for a small but significant proportion of Wisconsin deaths. Wisconsin death records show that for people of all ages in 2007, 25.1% of all **unintentional injury** deaths and 1.93% percent of **all** deaths were caused by falls. Among those age 65 and older, 67.3% of unintentional injury deaths and 2.24% of all deaths in that year were fall-related (Wisconsin Dept. of Health Services, Division of Public Health, Bureau of Health Information and Policy. Wisconsin Interactive Statistics on Health (WISH) data query system, <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/wish/>, Mortality Module, accessed 12/28/2008.)