

According to the Center for an Urban Future, Rochester's older adult population has seen a [higher growth rate](#) than that of any other major New York city over the last decade. The city's sixty-five and over population stands at just under [eleven percent](#). Sadly, individuals in this age group are frequent sufferers of slip and fall accidents. Slip and fall accidents account for [nine out of ten](#) fracture injuries in older people, and in some cases, the effects are grave. In fact, slip and fall accidents are the second leading cause of spinal cord injuries in individuals in the same age group.

The risk and severity of injury associated with such accidents increases with age. Sixty percent of slip and fall fatalities occur in individuals who are seventy-five or older. For adults eighty-five and older, injuries sustained during such accidents are the number one cause of injury-related death. Still, injury alone can pose enormous difficulty.

Half of all elderly adults hospitalized with hip fractures are unable to live independently after sustaining a fracture in a slip and fall accident. Unfortunately, assisted living does not eliminate the risk of slip and fall accidents among elderly individuals: Over sixty percent of those who live in nursing homes fall every year. Assisted living or not, the bathroom is a particularly dangerous place for the elderly, and measures should be taken to prevent undue injury. Some steps that can be taken include:

- 1. Grab Bars:** While [assisted living facilities](#) typically have grab bars that enable residents to stabilize themselves when using the toilet, many public restrooms do not. Grab bars would be helpful not only to elderly individuals but also, to those with disabilities or who are pregnant.
- 2. Non-Skid Mats or Strips:** Strategically placed non-skid mats or strips would allow individuals who are using the bathroom to avoid stepping onto slippery surfaces. Using a porous material might prevent the mats or strips from becoming slick in the event of water accumulation or flooding.