

# Elders

Elders can hurt themselves very badly if they are injured. They are more likely to go to the hospital or to die after being injured than any other age group.

Elders are most likely to die from falls, being outside in the cold too long and drowning. They are most likely to go to the hospital with injuries from falling, car and truck crashes or being beaten-up.

Almost all of the people who died from falls during the 1990s were elders. They are also most likely to go to the hospital after falling. Elders have bones that break easily, can't see as well, and are slower to react than younger people. Seniors are also more likely to fall because of medical problems and are more likely to have health problems after falling.

## What can elders do to stay safe from injury?

- **Use a walker if you need one.** You'll be less likely to fall.
- **Eat lots of foods that are good for your bones.** If your bones are strong, they're less likely to break. Choose traditional foods like fish head soup, arctic char skin, netted willow or duck meat. Or try cheese, put milk in your cereal or eat ice cream.
- **Walk around town to make your bones stronger.** Make sure you wear good boots in the wintertime so you don't slip on the ice.
- **Install grab rails in your house if you need to.**
- **Wear warm clothing when you're outside in the winter.** Pack extra clothes and blankets if you're planning to be on the land for a long time.
- **Be very careful when you're boating.** Always wear a life jacket or PFD. Don't get in a boat if you've been drinking or with anyone who is drunk.
- **Drive safely.** Wear a seat belt whenever you're in a car or truck, even if you're only going to the store. Never drink and drive. Be extra careful on NWT highways - if you get in an accident, it could be hours before you can see a nurse.
- **Ask for help if someone's hurting you.** It is wrong for anyone to hurt you, even a family member. Talk to your social worker to get help.

