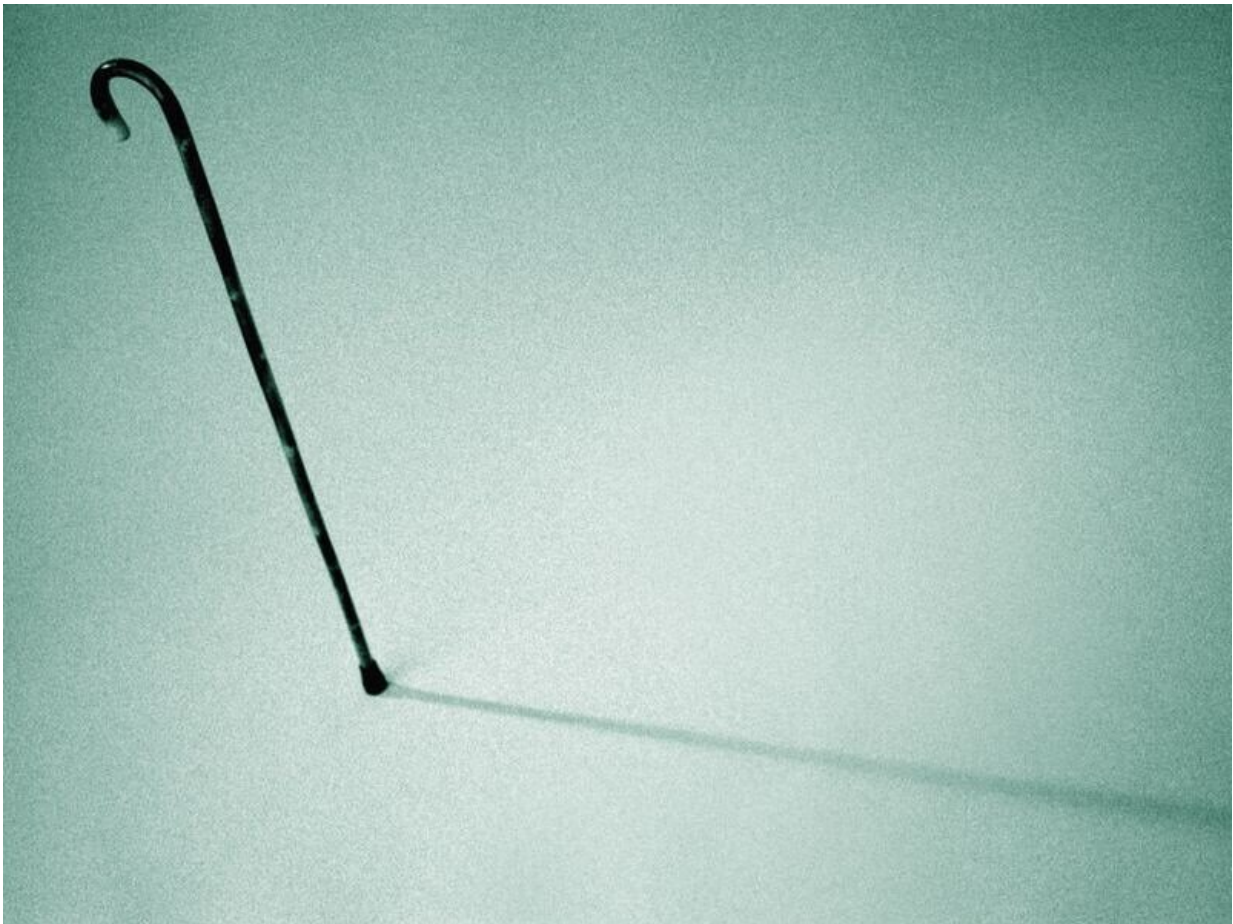


Serious falls pose risk to people living with HIV

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(HealthDay)—Benzodiazepines and muscle relaxants are associated with

serious falls among people living with HIV in their 50s, according to a study recently published in the *Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome*.

Julie A. Womack, Ph.D., from the VA Connecticut Healthcare System in West New Haven, and colleagues investigated whether the association between polypharmacy, hazardous alcohol and illicit substance use, and serious falls differed by HIV status among participants in the Veterans Aging Cohort Study. There were 13,530 individuals who experienced falls. These cases were matched to 67,060 controls by age, race, sex, HIV status, duration of observation, and baseline date.

The researchers found that among people living with HIV, [benzodiazepines](#) (odds ratio [OR,] 1.24) and [muscle relaxants](#) (OR, 1.29) were associated with serious falls, but they did not observe these findings among uninfected people. Key risk factors for falls in both groups included nonantiretroviral medications (per five medications; OR, 1.20), illicit substance use/abuse (OR, 1.44), hazardous alcohol use (OR, 1.30), and an opioid prescription (OR, 1.35).

"Prevention of serious falls should focus on reducing specific classes and absolute number of medications, and both alcohol and illicit substance use," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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