10 Years Standing Together to Prevent Falls

AOTA/APTA’s AGPT
Fall Prevention Presentation 2017
Are falls preventable?
YES!

Falls are largely preventable!
Come learn how.
Today’s Discussion

- Definition of a fall
- Fear of falling
- Risk factors for falling
- Action steps to reduce YOUR fall risk
What is a “fall”?

- Landing on the ground or some lower surface when you didn’t intend to be there.
- Includes slips, trips, etc.
- Does not include a medical event.

Schumway-Cook, 2000
Have you had a fall?

- Have you had a fall in the past year? Did you tell your primary care provider?

- Were you hurt?

- Do you worry about falling?

- Do you feel unsteady when standing or walking?

- A previous fall increases your future fall risk.
Do you limit activities?

- **Fear of Falling** is a lasting concern about falling that may cause a person to stop doing activities s/he remains able to do.
- Fear of falling increases future fall risk.
  - *Tinetti and Powell, 1993*
Why does fear of falling matter?

- May stop you from activities
- Legs weaken with inactivity
- Inactivity leads to falls
- May make the person feel alone
- May cause depression

Boyd & Stevens, 2009; Donoghue, Cronin, Savva, O’Reagan, & Kenny, 2013; Painter, 2012
Types of Fall Risk Factors

Most falls result from a number of risk factors:

- **Physical risk factors:** Changes in your body that increase your risk for a fall
- **Behavioral risk factors:** Things we do or don’t do that increase our fall risk
- **Environmental risk factors:** Hazards in our home or community
Fall Risk Factors

You CAN change:
- Physical inactivity
- Home environment
- Vision
- Medication Use
- Fear of falling
- Social isolation
- Weakness
- Improper use of assistive devices

You CAN’T change:
- Age
- Gender
- Ethnic background
What can YOU do to prevent falls?

- Exercise to improve your balance and strength. It takes 50 hours every 6 months to improve balance.
- Have your doctor or pharmacist review your medicines
- Have your vision checked
- Make your home safer
Exercise Recommendations

- Talk to your doctor before starting an exercise program.
- Begin with PT or fall prevention classes.
- Be sure classes are for your age group &/or ability level.
- Stick with it!
Environmental Recommendations

- Identify and eliminate fall hazards in your home and community

- *Check for Safety* Brochure in CDC’s STEADi Toolkit

- An OT or PT can help identify safety issues and solutions

AGS/BGS, 2010; Panel on Prevention, 2011
Medications and Falls Risk

- Side effects may make you dizzy
- Medication changes can increase fall risk
- Use one pharmacy.
- Ask for an annual medication review.
- Be sure you can read your labels.
Vision and Falls Risk

- Ask for annual eye exams after age 50.

- Multifocal lenses may blur or distort your vision looking down. Use separate reading glasses.

- Removing cataract(s) may reduce fall risk.

*AGS & BGS, 2010*
Blood Pressure and Fall Risk

- Check your blood pressure regularly.

- If you get dizzy when you stand up, see your doctor and have your ‘sit to stand’ blood pressure checked.

- Some blood pressure medications increase fall risk; speak with your doctor. Be very careful after a beginning a new medication.

AGS/BGS, 2010; Panel on Prevention, 2011
Chronic Conditions and Fall Risk

- Chronic Conditions may contribute to your fall risk. Careful management will limit the risk.

- Diabetes
- Arthritis
- Stroke
- Neurological disorders like Multiple Sclerosis (MS) or Parkinson’s
- Chronic Pain
- Depression
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Sleep disorders

AGS/BGS, 2010; Panel on Prevention, 2011
Risk of Falling May Increase

- Change in your medications
- Illness or infection
- Pain
- Lack of sleep
- Sad or worried
- Reduced activity level
- Change in use of cane or walker
- Move to new home
Start Small

Choose one risk factor to address first ---

- **Pharmacist & Doctor** - review medications for side effects that may cause you to fall

- **Occupational Therapist** - home assessment and recommendations to make your home safer

- **Physical Therapist** - help with physical activity, balance, strength, and moving safely
If a Fall Occurs ......

- Check for injury
- Call for help, if needed
- Seek medical attention right away if you might have hit your head
- Call your doctor
- Check for safety hazards
- Learn how to get up safely from your physical therapist

http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=getting+up+from+floor+with+chair+photo&view=detailv2&id=6078B0575525F1E0A63A99D372BE2F78F7BF411&selectedIndex=0&ccid=U1AEMRqQtqsimid=608013721659769884&thid=JN.I5Q1AIQ1z9v31ZkH5XKJg&ajaxhist=0

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Evidence-Based Fall Prevention Programs
Otago Exercise Program (OEP)

- Done one-to-one with a trained PT and is delivered as part of a complete PT program. Sometimes used in small groups with a PT/PTA.

- Includes exercise and walking program designed for you.

- If you or your physician feel you should begin with PT, be sure your PT includes the OEP.

- Great start for later Stepping On® (SO) program.
Matter of Balance

- Includes eight weekly 2-hour sessions including peer group discussion, exercise, education and some behavior modification.
- Excellent for people who are fearful of falling.
- All exercises can be done in sitting or supported standing.
- Great start for later Stepping On.
- Visit http://www.mainehealth.org/mob
Stepping On® (SO)

- Seven weekly 2-hour classes including peer discussion, exercise, expert lectures
- Great follow-up to Otago (OEP) &/or Matter of Balance
- SO classes include standing exercises that are done by a chair independently in class and at home
- You should feel safe standing and walking independently before you begin SO
- Visit https://wihealthyaging.org/stepping-on
Tai Chi or Tai Ji Quan

- Fantastic program for ongoing fitness and balance training after Stepping On
- Does not include educational component
- Classes are usually on-going and not limited to certain weeks - great for fitness
- Participants should be able to stand on one leg for 3-5 seconds

http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=tai+chi+photo&view=detailv2&idd=345A0D1407222D9168D9AD5338A7FB80518FB735B&selectedIndex=83&ccid=%2f6oTeds2&simid=608050211697264102&thid=JN.K6cjriJTNlh3wOKQUJcCg&ajaxhist=0

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Finding Evidence-Based Falls Prevention Programs

- Local Senior Center
- Area Agency on Aging [www.eldercare.gov](http://www.eldercare.gov) or 1-800-677-1116
- Hospitals or health clinics
- YMCA for programs like Tai Chi
REMEMBER:

Move More!
Questions/Discussion
Evidence-Based Resources

- National Council on Aging: Evidence-Based Falls Prevention Programs

- Falls Free® Initiative: Find your state’s chapter
  - Provides resources and evidence-based practice to reduce fall-related injuries and death among older adults
  - [https://www.ncoa.org/resources/falls-free-coalition-overview/](https://www.ncoa.org/resources/falls-free-coalition-overview/)
Thank You for Coming!
Need more information?

- A Physical Therapist’s Guide to Falls:
  [http://www.moveforwardpt.com/symptomsconditionsdetail.aspx?cid=85726fb6-14c4-4c16-9a4c-3736dceac9f0](http://www.moveforwardpt.com/symptomsconditionsdetail.aspx?cid=85726fb6-14c4-4c16-9a4c-3736dceac9f0)

- Remaining in Your Home as you Age:
  [https://www.aota.org/About-Occupational-Therapy/Patients-Clients/Adults.aspx](https://www.aota.org/About-Occupational-Therapy/Patients-Clients/Adults.aspx)

- The AARP Home Fit Guide:
References


References


References


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