Falls Prevention Programs: Saving Lives, Saving Money

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Senior Falls Prevention Coalition of Clay and Platte Counties

Our Mission:
To reduce falls in our senior population through awareness, education, and access to effective prevention programs and resources.

Seniorfallsprevention.org
Our Focus Areas:

- Education and Awareness of falls risks
- Promote Health Providers to do more falls risk screenings (STEADI TOOL KIT FROM CDC)
- Access to evidence-based interventions and other resources
- Partnerships with Fire/EMS & Primary Care Clinics
Fall Risk Factors

- Multiple risk factors—some are modifiable
- Lower body weakness
- Difficulties with gait and balance
- Use of psychoactive & OTC medications
- Postural dizziness
- Problems with feet and/or shoes
- Environmental Hazards—pets, loose rugs
The Facts about Falls

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Missouri Department of Health & Human Services:

- Falls are the leading cause of death due to injury among the elderly; and 87% of all fractures in the elderly are due to falls.
- Missouri’s rate of injury for seniors due to falls is 31% higher than the national average.
- Nearly half of fall-injury cases among MO older adults occur at home.
More Facts about Falls

- Falls are the leading cause of emergency visits.
- Seniors with chronic illnesses such as Arthritis, COPD, and Hypertension are particular “red flags” for fall risks.
- Seniors with chronic pain are 1.5 times more likely to fall.
- Less than half of the Medicare beneficiaries who fall talked to their health care provider about it.
- $30 billion is spent annually on healthcare related to falls.
- Admission to a long term care facility is often a result of a fall.
- Many people who fall, even if they are not injured, develop a fear of falling.
The good news is that falls are not an inevitable part of aging. They can be prevented by making lifestyle changes and understanding common issues that put anyone at risk for falls.

Modify the risk.

Reduce the number of falls.

**PREVENTION IS THE BEST STRATEGY!**
The Importance of Multifactorial Interventions

- History, Physical Exam, Functional Assessment
- Exercise Component:
  - Matter of Balance - Enhanced Fitness -- Stay Strong
  - Stepping On -- Tai Chi
- Environmental Adaptation
- Medication review
- Vitamin D (800 IU)
- Vision check
The MOB course is an 8 session (2 hours each) workshop that helps participants learn how to:

- View falls and the fear of falling as controllable;
- Set realistic goals for increasing activity;
- Change their environment to reduce fall risk factors;
- Promote exercise to increase strength and balance.
Matter of Balance

Funding from Clay County Senior Services

Northland Shepherd’s Center coordinates MOB program

In 2015, 125 seniors took the class
7 new coaches
Since 2008-over 350 have taken Matter of Balance
Matter of Balance Health Outcomes

- 97% of participants are more comfortable talking about fear of falling.
- 97% feel comfortable increasing activity.
- 99% plan to continue exercising.
- 98% would recommend MOB.
In 2013: CMS evaluated community based wellness and prevention programs. MOB demonstrated a $938 savings in the area of unplanned inpatient hospitalizations, skilled nursing facilities and home health.
What type(s) of falls prevention activities are senior centers doing?
89% have implemented MOB or Tai Chi
79% conduct B/P screenings
77% education about falls prevention
What was most successful prevention program or activity?

28% senior centers reported Matter of Balance most successful (other responses: Tai Chi, Stepping On, and Enhanced Fitness)

Falls Prevention is a community effort—Aging Network, Fire/EMS, Hospitals, Universities
Questions or comments?
816 455-4800
www.seniorfallsprevention.org
See us also on Facebook.

Falls Prevention Awareness Day is September 22!