



MAFES Dawg Tracks

September 13, 2010

Ten Simple Habits to Help Prevent Falls



According to one study relating to slips, trips and falls, the majority of all accidents results in back sprains and strains, contusions and fractures. 15 percent of all accidental deaths are second only to motor vehicle deaths.

Falls can result in serious consequences. We want to discuss today 10 simple things that you can do to help prevent falls:

- **Be aware of your surroundings –**
Look before you leap - a good hint to avoid a literal fall, as well as be cognizant of a questionable business or personal life decision. Be careful where and how you walk. Walking too fast will get you over-balanced.
- **Get plenty of rest, the proper nutrition, and good hydration –**
Stay energized with plenty of sleep. When you are tired, you are less aware and more prone to bump into objects around you. Be sure to eat properly and drink plenty of water. Always follow the advice of your doctors.
- **Simplify –**
Remove the clutter. Clean up your personal environment by getting rid of clutter and excess furniture that could cause you to fall. Arrange furniture so that you can have clear access through the doors and walkways in your home.
- **Avoid trip-ups –**
Keep it clear! Remove items that lie on the floor and cause you to trip and fall, such as: area rugs, extension cords, and other things that can cause you to get hung up and fall.
- **Clearance –**
Make Way!! Be sure that you have 36 to 45 inches of clearance in walkways.
- **Hold on! –**
Get a grip!! While walking, if you feel the need to hold on to something, hold to sturdy chairs and sofas to keep you stable.
- **Pay Attention –**
Know what's trouble? Pay close attention to fall trouble spots. Restrooms, shop areas and equipment are prime areas for falls. Handrails strategically placed in areas where they might be used to help someone control their balance are ideal. Good footwear is a plus for protecting yourself from a fall. Wear shoes with non-slip heels and soles. If you wear slippers or regular street shoes, be sure to wear rubber soles, as they will give you more safety as well as more traction on the floors.
- **Exercise –**
Move it or lose it! Ask your doctor to devise a plan for you personally to help improve your gait, balance and muscle tone. Regular exercise improves all areas of your life - enjoy it.
- **Medication –**
Follow directions! Failure to take medications properly is a major cause of falls and fall-related injuries. So take your medications. Report any side effects or negative reactions to your doctor.

Actually, all of these tips are good for reducing the chance of fall hazards, but the latter ones are really good advice for improving or maintaining your quality of life.

Ted Gordon-Risk Mgmt. / Loss Control Mgr.

MAFES / MSU-ES

(662) 566-2201

Excerpts: www.nasdonline.org

3/24/ 2010