
Fall Prevention

— September 2018 —

Did You Know?

- One in four Americans aged 65+ falls each year.
- Two-thirds of those who fall do so again within six months.
- Every 11 seconds, an older adult is treated in the emergency room for a fall; every 19 minutes, an older adult dies from a fall.
- Falls are the leading cause of fatal injury and the most common cause of nonfatal trauma-related hospital admissions among older adults.

Did You Know?

- Falls result in more than 2.8 million injuries treated in emergency departments annually, including over 800,000 hospitalizations and more than 27,000 deaths.
- One-fourth of seniors who fracture a hip from a fall will die within six months of the injury.

Did You Know?

- When an elderly person falls, their hospital stays are almost twice longer than those of elderly patients who are admitted for any other reason.
- In 2015, the total cost of fall injuries was \$50 billion. Medicare and Medicaid shouldered 75% of the cost.
- The financial toll for older adult falls is expected to increase as the population ages and may reach \$67.7 billion by 2020.

Did You Know?

- Falls, with or without injury, also carry a heavy quality of life impact. A growing number of older adults fear falling and, as a result, limit their activities and social engagements. This can result in further physical decline, depression, social isolation, and feeling of hopelessness.

What can YOU as a HHA do?

- HHA can help prevent falls by being knowledgeable about fall prevention and help educate clients. The following tips can be given to your clients:
 - Teach Clients not to walk and talk at the same time. Concentrate on the task of walking and continue the conversation after they've reached a safe place.
 - Have them wear appropriate footwear. When walking long distances or in unfamiliar areas, wear flat, nonslip shoes. Also wear shoes that fit well and comfortable.

What can YOU as a HHA do cont.?

- Have clients arrange furniture so that it creates plenty of room to walk freely. If they use a walking aid, ensure that doorways and hallways are large enough to get through with any devices they may use.
- Have them remove throw rugs or secure them firmly to the floor.
- Teach them to use caution when carrying items while walking.

What can YOU as a HHA do cont.?

- Have them use a nightlight when getting out of bed at night.
- Teach them to know their limitations. If there is a task they cannot complete easily, tell them not to risk a fall to complete it.
- Have them make and keep their regular doctor visits.
 - Have them review medications with their doctor at each visit, review if they have fallen or gotten dizzy since the last visit.
 - Also mention that they should also see their eye doctor regularly as eye conditions can be a cause for a fall.

What can YOU as a HHA do cont.?

- Instruct your client to stay active, with their doctors ok they should do low impact activities such as walking, swimming, or tai chi. Such activities reduce the risk of falls by improving strength, balance, coordination, and flexibility.
- Teach client to keep commonly used items within close reach (ex. Remote control, water, glasses etc..)

Assistive Devices That May Help

- Hand rails for both sides of stairways.
- Nonslip treads for bare-wood steps.
- A raised toilet seat or one with armrests.
- Grab bars for the shower or tub.
- A sturdy plastic seat for the shower or tub-plus a hand-held shower nozzle for bathing while sitting down.

What To Do If A Client Falls!

- Check on client before moving them, are they in pain, bleeding, or have obvious injuries?
 - If the answer is yes do not move the patient and call the office or on call phone immediately and report the fall to nursing. They will advise you as to what to do.
- If your client denies pain or injury help them up safely and then report the incident to the office or on-call immediately.
- If a client reports a fall that happened why you were not there you must also report that incident immediately.