EEEEEk! I’ve fallen!

The 4 E’s to prevent falls
Objectives

- Define the key elements of an effective program.
- Discuss the range of Fall Prevention strategies that can be offered within the ALF.
- Identify preparation strategies for fall recovery, to provide a safe environment for both resident and caregiver.
- List examples of successful measures in fall prevention.

- Every 20 minutes an older adult dies from a fall in the United States. Many more are injured. Take a stand to prevent falls.
Assisted Living Residents

• About 20 to 30% of older adult falls cause injuries that can limit mobility, diminish quality of life, and increase the risk of premature death.
• Falls cause over 95 percent of hip fractures and are the most common cause of traumatic brain injury.
• One-in-five people who sustain a hip fracture die within a year following their injury.

Why does a fall happen?

**Health-based risks:**
- Balance problems
- Weakness
- Vision problems
- Chronic diseases
- Medications

**Trigger:**
- Tripping
- Stumbling
- New illness
- Dizzy spell
- Overexertion
- Alcohol

**Environmental risks:**
- Home hazards
- Outside hazards
- Poor footwear
Why is Fear of Falling a Risk Factor?

- **THE FEAR of Falling**
- **INACTIVITY**
- **INCREASED WEAKNESS**
- **A FALL**
assess EVERYONE

**Fall Risk Profile**

- Fall Risk Profile might include
- Up and GO = timed or not –
- Berg Balance
- Medication profile
- Put it together – Morse fall risk or other type
Medication Review

• Meds are often the most modifiable factor for fall risk
• Most meds involve a trade-off
• Clarify benefits vs risks
• Lower dose may provide benefit with lower risk

Take a closer look

• Reduce meds that cause postural hypotension
  Reduce Risky Meds such as:
  • Sleep meds – Ambien, Ativan
  • Sedating antihistamines (Benedryl)
  • Over the counter sleep aids (PM analgesics)
  • Overactive bladder meds (Ditropan, Ditrol)
  • Muscle Relaxants (Flexeril)
  • Check B/P meds
  • Check Diabetes meds
  • Remember Flomax can cause hypotension
Environment

PREVENTING FALLS STEP BY STEP

Among older adults, falls are a leading cause for hospitalization and emergency care. Falls can lead to potentially severe injuries such as hip fractures and head trauma, and can even increase the risk of early death. During Falls Prevention Awareness Week, Ameksys® Home Health and Hospice offers the following tips to reduce the risk of falling so seniors can live healthier, more independent lives.

**IN THE HOME:**
- Know about any side effects of medication that could potentially lead to a fall.
- Use non-slip rubber mats in the bathtub and shower.
- Keep your home well lit, placing lights in hallways, stairways, and bathrooms.
- Clean up spills and trash as they happen.
- Use handrails on the stairs and in the bathrooms.
- Clear walkways of clutter, electrical cords, etc.
- Get rid of those rugs or non-skid rubber tape to secure them.

**YOURSELF:**
- Exercise to improve strength, balance, and coordination.
- Consult your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.
- Wear sturdy shoes and/or non-skid socks.
- If you live in a region that gets snowy weather, consider putting special cleats on your shoes to prevent you for slipping on the snow and ice.

www.ameksys.com
Environmental Strategies

Step 1: Environmental risks include

- Home hazards:
  - Throw rugs
  - Poor lighting
  - Trip hazards (cords, pets, etc)
- Outside hazards
  - Uneven or slippery surfaces
- Footwear
  - High heels; thick or slippery soles
- Improper use of assistive devices

Prevention in High fall areas

- Grab bars
- Handrails for halls and stairs
- Non Skid mats
- Non Skid shower chairs
Exercise focusing on leg strength and balance can help prevent falls

Encourage Exercise

Goals –
- Improve Balance
- Increase Muscle Strength
- Improve Posture
- Increase Endurance
- Improve Flexibility
Falls Free – NCOA National Council on Aging

Education

• Fall Prevention classes – weekly sessions with take aways
• Practice falling
• Practice recovery
• Fall Drill Strategies – similar to Fire Drill – creating “muscle memory”
Education for Staff

- Fall Prevention strategies
- Use of handled gait belts
- Positive efforts yield big results
- Rounding
- Auditing
- Role playing to turn attitudes around

Fall Recovery techniques

- Assist to stand after a fall (2:08 video)
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=10jR0zjl19Y
Fall Recovery Tools

- Non Mechanical
- Fancy “steps”
- ResQup
  - Comprised of 4½ inch horizontal levels (3 levels at 4½, 9, & 13½ inches from floor level) that can be easily retrieved and placed into position while the patient is on the floor
  - [https://safepatientsolutions.com/the-resqup/](https://safepatientsolutions.com/the-resqup/)
  - Approx. $400

Air Assist tools for Recovery

- Mangar Camel or Elk
  - The Camel lifting chair will raise a fallen person to a sitting position.
  - [www.prismmedicalinc.com](http://www.prismmedicalinc.com)
  - Approx $1,500 – $3,000
Fall Recovery – Safe for everyone?

How to get up from the floor (after a fall) - MacGyver style!

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ETgQD8QhZs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ETgQD8QhZs)

Using common household items to assist on raising off the floor

- Books
- Up- Ended end tables

Next Steps

- Assign a Falls Prevention coordinator and committee (monthly)
- Set out goals for resident participation.
- Collect data for root cause analysis
- Rounding and auditing for hazards
- Talk it up! Write up successes! Make fall prevention fun!
Websites

- A resident centered website reviewing fall prevention.
  http://www.learnnottofall.com/index.jsp
- CDC - 2017 Toolkit for Falls Prevention -
  https://www.cdc.gov/steadi/index.html
- Evidence Based Fall prevention programs (Exercise and Education):
  https://www.ncoa.org/healthy-aging/falls-prevention/falls-prevention‐programs‐for‐older‐adults/
- OTAGO Exercise Program:
- VA FALL prevention Toolkit:

Resources:

- https://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalsafety/falls/compendium.html