

FALLING INTO COMMUNITY: *BEFORE THE FALL*

Pepsi Helmuth, LVN
(916-521-0266)
Geriatric Resource Specialist

Judith Kautz, LCSW
(530-557-5520)
Alzheimer's Outreach Program
Coordinator
Sierra Nevada Home Care and
Sierra Nevada Hospital Foundation



MENTAL HEALTH AND HOW IT IMPACTS OUR FALL RISK

- **Depression:** depressive symptoms are associated with greater fall risk in older adults
- Use of anti-depressants to treat depression increases fall risk due to side effects
- Treatment of depressive symptoms using non pharmacological approaches should be considered as part of falls prevention programs
- **Anxiety and fear of falling:** is another very common mental health condition that increases falls in older adults, and can lead to activity restriction and depression
- Post fall syndrome can develop after a fall, which is characterized by extreme anxiety around standing and walking to the point that quality of life is greatly reduced

PHYSICAL HEALTH AND HOW IT IMPACTS OUR FALL RISK

CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITIONS:

- BLOOD PRESSURE
- PARKINSON'S
- PAIN
- ARTHRITIS
- HEART DISEASE
- INNER EAR PROBLEMS
- DIABETES
- DEMENTIA



Caption

COGNITIVE HEALTH AND HOW IT IMPACTS OUR FALL RISK

- People with dementia are more at risk of falls
- This is due to dementia symptoms such as muscle weakness, problems with mobility and balance
- More than 3 times as likely to fracture a hip when they fall
- Are often more confused and disoriented about their environment



Caption

HOW TO AVOID A FALL: SIGNS TO LOOK OUT FOR



Caption

- . WEAKNESS, ESPECIALLY IN THE LEGS
- . DECREASED SPEED IN WALKING
- . PROBLEMS PUTTING PANTS ON WHILE STANDING
- . TENDENCY TO REACH FOR SOMETHING WHILE NAVIGATING HOME
- . PROPER MEDICATION MANAGEMENT
- . SELF ISOLATION
- . CHANGES IN HEALTH CONDITIONS
- . DIFFICULTY RAISING SELF FROM SITTING POSITION
- . CATCHING YOUR TOE WHILE WALKING
- . IF YOU DID FALL, COULD YOU GET YOURSELF UP?

PRECAUTIONS YOU CAN TAKE TO PREVENT FALLS

- Identify your mental health symptoms
- Address these symptoms as appropriate
- Be aware of increase fall risk re taking anti depressants
- Arrange for adequate lighting
- Clear walking paths
- Keep important things by bed
- Information and reminders in common place
- Stay physically active

FINDING COMMUNITY!

- . FAMILY AND FRIENDS
- . EXERCISE PROGRAMS
- . ATTENDING EVENTS OF INTEREST
- . PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN
- . PHARMACIST
- . FAITH BASED ORGANIZATION
- . SUPPORT GROUPS
- . LOCAL FIRE DEPARTMENT
- . HARDWARE STORE
- . PHYSICAL AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS



RESOURCES IN OUR COMMUNITY



- Tai Chi in the park!
- Social Outreach MSW
- Senior Outreach RN
- Helping Hands
- Balance Classes through Springhill PT
- FREED
- Gold Country LIFT
- Connecting Point