

Impact of Falls

Falls among older adults can have devastating impacts, leading to serious injuries such as hip fractures, head traumas, and even death. Beyond the physical harm, falls can significantly diminish quality of life, resulting in a loss of independence, increased fear of falling, and social isolation. The economic burden is also substantial, with high medical costs for treatment and long-term care. Additionally, the psychological effects of falls can lead to depression and anxiety, creating a cycle that further increases the risk of future falls.

Prevention

Implementing practical and reasonable lifestyle changes can effectively reduce the risk of falls. Regular physical activity, such as strength and balance exercises, helps maintain muscle mass and coordination. Ensuring homes are free of tripping hazards, like loose rugs and clutter, and installing grab bars in key areas can create a safer living environment. Wearing appropriate footwear with good support and non-slip soles, having regular vision and hearing check-ups, and managing medications to avoid side effects that affect balance are also crucial steps. These changes are simple yet powerful ways to enhance safety and well-being, significantly lowering the likelihood of falls.

Additional resources available at healthylivingforme.org/MFPC

Educate Yourself

Learn about fall risks and prevention strategies through community programs and resources.

Home Safety

Remove tripping hazards such as loose rugs, clutter, and electrical cords. Ensure that walkways are clear.

Improve Lighting

Ensure that all areas of the home, especially stairways, hallways, and entryways, are well-lit. Use nightlights where needed.

Engage with Others

Social activities can enhance balance and coordination through increased physical activity and regular movement. Mental well-being, reduces stress and anxiety, which are known risk factors for falls.

Regular Checkups

Have regular checkups to monitor health conditions that could affect balance and mobility, such as heart or neurological conditions, low blood pressure, vision, hearing and mood.

Review Medications

Have a healthcare provider review all medications (including over-the-counter) to identify those that may cause dizziness or drowsiness.

Non-Slip Mats

Put non-slip mats in the bathtub and on shower floors.

Hydrate

Dehydration can cause dizziness. Drink plenty of fluids throughout the day.

Exercise Regularly

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Engage in exercises that improve strength, balance, and coordination, such as Tai Chi, yoga, or strength training.

Proper Footwear

Choose shoes with non-slip soles and avoid high heels, slippers without support, or walking in socks.