

FALLS PREVENTION TIPS FOR CAREGIVERS



Discuss any health information that puts your loved one at an increased risk for a fall.



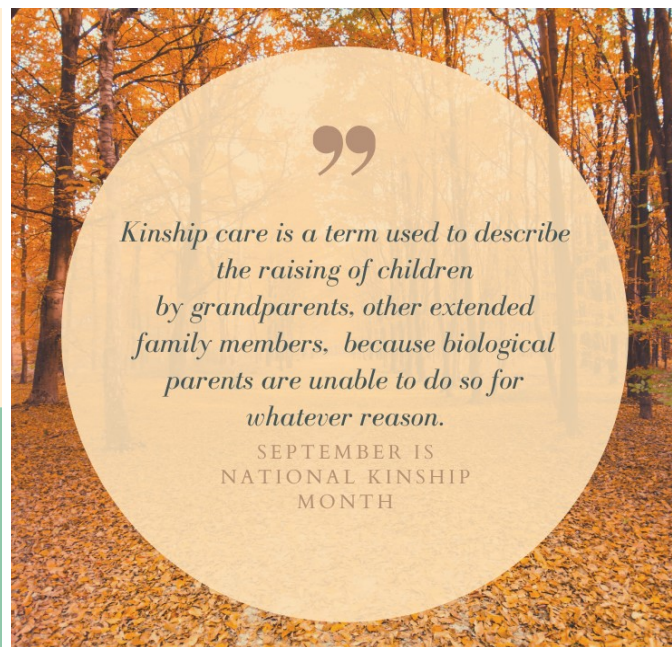
Ask about their last eye exam. Make sure they have effective glasses or contacts and are treating any diseases of the eyes. Poor vision leads to increased risk of falling.



Talk about prescriptions. Some prescriptions lead to decreased balance and drug interactions or side effects can increase the likelihood of a fall.



Do a walkthrough of their home to make sure the home is safe. Look for good lighting, hand rails and grab bars. Install any need safety items.



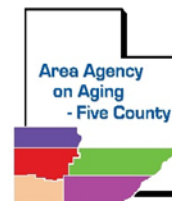
Kinship care is a term used to describe the raising of children by grandparents, other extended family members, because biological parents are unable to do so for whatever reason.

SEPTEMBER IS
NATIONAL KINSHIP
MONTH

Visit our Blog and Facebook Page during the month of September for more on Kinship Caregiving.

The Tip Jar

- **Most falls can be prevented. You have the power to reduce your risk and protect your older loved ones from a serious fall!**
- **Did you know that Medicare fraud costs taxpayers billions of dollars each year? You can do your part to prevent fraud by reviewing your Medicare Summary Notice or Explanation of Benefits. If you notice a mistake, contact the provider first. If you don't recognize the provider, contact your local SMP program at (435)673-3548.**



Involved Aging: News and Announcements

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www.areaagencyonagingfivecounty.org

www.facebook.com/AgingFiveCountyUtah

www.pinterest.com/fivecountyaging/

Falls Are Not A Normal Part of Aging!

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed a lot of things. One thing that's still the same? Falling is NOT a normal part of aging.

Falls remain a leading cause of injury for people aged 65 and older. Falls threaten older adults' safety and independence and generate enormous economic and personal costs. However, through practical lifestyle adjustments, evidence-based falls prevention programs, and clinical-community partnerships, the number of falls among older adults can be substantially reduced.

Taking action to address the risk of falling is an important way to stay healthy and independent as long as possible. Falls prevention activities are beneficial to everyone across the lifespan, and they can be fun!

During the month of September, we will be focusing on Falls Prevention Awareness. Falls prevention is a team effort. There are others who want to help you maintain your and your mobility and reduce the risk of falling and injuries.

Evidence-based community fall prevention programs are available through the Area Agency on Aging-Five County. Tai Chi for Arthritis is one such program. Many studies have shown Tai Chi to be one of the most effective exercises for preventing falls. Tai Chi for Arthritis helps people with arthritis to improve all muscular strength, flexibility, balance, stamina, and more. There are ongoing classes happening now throughout the Five County area. For more information about Tai Chi for Arthritis and other evidence-based fall prevention programs, visit our website: www.areaagencyonagingfivecounty.org or contact Maria at 435-673-3548 or rsvp@fivecounty.utah.gov. Together, we can be FALLS FREE!

Check Your Fall Risk - Answer “Yes” or “No” for each statement below . Add up the number of points for each “Yes” answer. If you scored 4 points or more, you may be at risk for falling.

1. I have fallen in the past year. (2)

People who have fallen once are likely to fall again.

2. I use or have been advised to use a cane or walker to get around safely. (2)

People who have been advised to use a cane or walker may already be more likely to fall.

3. Sometimes I feel unsteady when I am walking. (1)

Unsteadiness or needing support while walking are signs of poor balance.

4. I steady myself by holding onto furniture when walking at home. (1)

This is also a sign of poor balance.

5. I am worried about falling. (1)

People who are worried about falling are more likely to fall.

6. I need to push with my hands to stand up from a chair. (1)

This is a sign of weak leg muscles, a major reason for falling.

7. I have some trouble stepping up on to a curb. (1)

This is also a sign of weak leg muscles.

8. I often have to rush to the toilet. (1)

Rushing to the bathroom, especially at night, increases your chance of falling.

9. I have lost feeling in my feet. (1)

Numbness in your feet can cause stumbles and lead to falls.

10. I take medicine that sometimes makes me feel light-headed or more tired than usual. (1)

Side effects from medicines can sometimes increase your chance of falling.

11. I take medicine to help me sleep or improve my mood. (1)

These medicines can sometimes increase your chance of falling.

12. I often feel sad or depressed. (1)

Symptoms of depression, such as not feeling well or feeling slowed down, are linked to falls.

This checklist was developed by the Greater Los Angeles VA Geriatric Research Education Clinical Center and affiliates and is a validated fall risk self-assessment tool (Rubenstein et al. J Safety Res; 2011: 42(6)493-499). This content is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.



Medicare Open Enrollment: Don't Set It and Forget It. Set a Meeting and Save!

Each year, Medicare beneficiaries have the opportunity to change their Medicare Prescription Drug plans and Medicare Advantage Plans during the annual Open Enrollment Period, held between October 15th and December 7th. During

this time, Medicare beneficiaries may notice an increase in Medicare related advertisements and it may be difficult to know where to turn for unbiased, objective assistance.

The Area Agency on Aging – Five County is here to help. Staff and volunteers with the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) can help local Medicare beneficiaries navigate the options available in our area. Medicare counselors with the SHIP program can provide benefits explanations and plan comparisons for all of the Medicare Part D and Medicare Advantage Plans available in Southwest Utah.

Every Medicare beneficiary with a Medicare Advantage Plan or Medicare Prescription Drug Plan could benefit from a plan review. This plan review takes only a few minutes to complete and could result in hundreds of dollars in savings.

Prescription drug plans and Medicare Advantage Plans can change their premium amounts, copays, deductibles, formularies and In-Network from year to year so even the plan that was best last year may not still be the best option. And because everyone’s situation is unique, the “best” plan for one person may not be the same for their friend, neighbor or even spouse.

Don't miss your chance to make sure your Medicare coverage meets your current needs. Check our website: www.areaagencyonagingfivecounty.org in early October for more information or contact the SHIP program at 435-673-3548.