

Standing Together to Prevent Falls

AOTA/APTA's AGPT

Fall Prevention Presentation



Are falls preventable?



Photo from giftsandcollectiblesgalore.wordpress.com

The background of the slide features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of blue, ranging from light sky blue to deep navy blue. These shapes are primarily located on the right side and bottom, creating a modern, dynamic feel.

YES!

Falls are largely
preventable!
Come learn how.

Today's Discussion

- ▶ Definition of a fall
- ▶ Fear of falling
- ▶ Risk factors for falling
- ▶ Action steps to reduce YOUR fall risk



Illustration © Timurd

What is a “fall”?

- Landing on the ground or some lower surface when you didn't intend to be there.
- Includes slips, trips, etc.
- Does not include a medical event.

Schumway-Cook, 2000



Have you had a fall?

- ▶ Have you had a fall in the past year? Did you tell your primary care provider?
- ▶ Were you hurt?
- ▶ Do you worry about falling?
- ▶ Do you feel unsteady when standing or walking?
- ▶ A previous fall increases your future fall risk.

Do you limit activities?

- **Fear of Falling** is a lasting concern about falling that may cause a person to stop doing activities s/he remains able to do.
- Fear of falling increases future fall risk.
- *Tinetti and Powell, 1993*



www.bing.com

Why does fear of falling matter?

- May stop you from activities
- Legs weaken with inactivity
- Inactivity leads to falls
- May make the person feel alone
- May cause depression



www.ncoa.org

Types of Fall Risk Factors

Most falls result from a number of risk factors:

- ▶ **Physical risk factors:** Changes in your body that increase your risk for a fall
- ▶ **Behavioral risk factors:** Things we do or don't do that increase our fall risk
- ▶ **Environmental risk factors:** Hazards in our home or community



Fall Risk Factors

You CAN change:

- ▶ Physical inactivity
- ▶ Home environment
- ▶ Vision
- ▶ Medication Use
- ▶ Fear of falling
- ▶ Social isolation
- ▶ Weakness
- ▶ Improper use of assistive devices

You CAN'T change:

- ▶ Age
- ▶ Gender
- ▶ Ethnic background

What can YOU do to prevent falls?

- ▶ **Exercise to improve your balance and strength. It takes 50 hours every 6 months to improve balance.**
- ▶ Have your doctor or pharmacist review your medicines
- ▶ Have your vision checked
- ▶ Make your home safer



Exercise Recommendations



- ▶ Talk to your doctor before starting an exercise program.
- ▶ Begin with PT or fall prevention classes.
- ▶ Be sure classes are for *your* age group &/or ability level.
- ▶ Stick with it!

Environmental Recommendations

- ▶ Identify and eliminate fall hazards in your home and community
- ▶ *Check for Safety* Brochure in CDC's STEADI Toolkit
- ▶ An OT or PT can help identify safety issues and solutions



AGS/BGS, 2010; Panel on Prevention, 2011

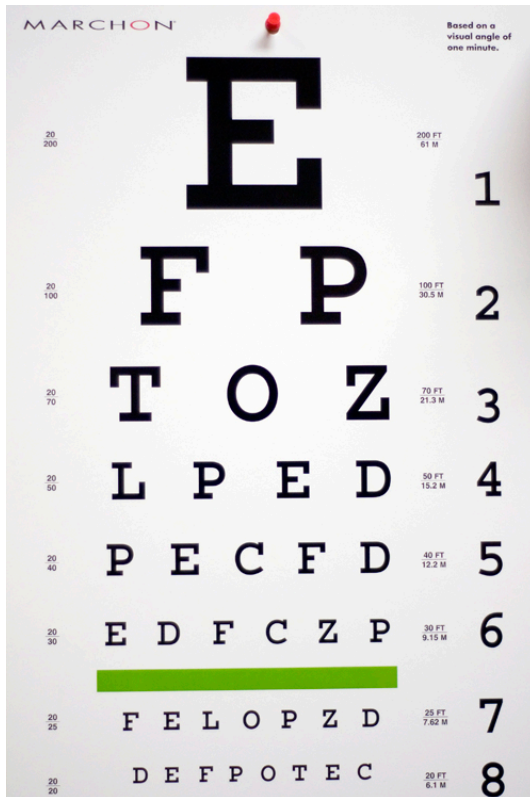
Medications and Falls Risk

- ▶ Side effects may make you dizzy
- ▶ Medication changes can increase fall risk
- ▶ Use one pharmacy.
- ▶ Ask for an annual medication review.
- ▶ Be sure you can read your labels.



https://d1hekt5vpuuw9b.cloudfront.net/assets/article/fe274ef18e93e75562dc05fe87b18316_are-you-taking-too-much-medicine-580x326_featuredImage.jpg

Vision and Falls Risk



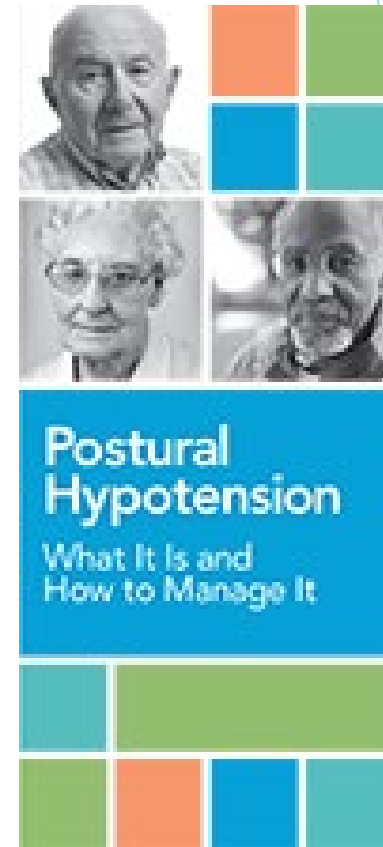
http://www.steadmaneye.com/clipart/eyecharts/eye_chart.jpg

- Ask for annual eye exams after age 50.
- Multifocal lenses may blur or distort your vision looking down. Use separate reading glasses.
- Removing cataract(s) may reduce fall risk.

AGS & BGS, 2010

Blood Pressure and Fall Risk

- ▶ Check your blood pressure regularly.
- ▶ If you get dizzy when you stand up, see your doctor and have your 'sit to stand' blood pressure checked.
- ▶ Some blood pressure medications increase fall risk; speak with your doctor. Be very careful after a beginning a new medication.



Chronic Conditions and Fall Risk

- ▶ Chronic Conditions may contribute to your fall risk. Careful management will limit the risk.
 - ▶ Diabetes
 - ▶ Arthritis
 - ▶ Stroke
 - ▶ Neurological disorders like Multiple Sclerosis (MS) or Parkinson's
 - ▶ Chronic Pain
 - ▶ Depression
 - ▶ Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
 - ▶ Sleep disorders

Risk of Falling May Increase

- Change in your medications
- Illness or infection
- Pain
- Lack of sleep
- Sad or worried
- Reduced activity level
- Change in use of cane or walker
- Move to new home



<http://www.opinionscentral.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Medline-Folding-Rollator-Walker-with-Folding-8-inch-Wheel.jpg>

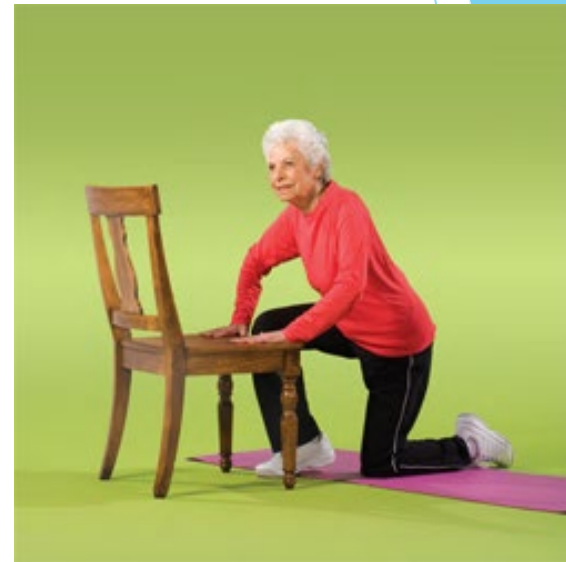
Start Small

Choose one risk factor to address first ---

- **Pharmacist & Doctor** - review medications for side effects that may cause you to fall
- **Occupational Therapist** - home assessment and recommendations to make your home safer
- **Physical Therapist** - help with physical activity, balance, strength, and moving safely

If a Fall Occurs

- ▶ Check for injury
- ▶ Call for help, if needed
- ▶ Seek medical attention right away if you might have hit your head
- ▶ Call your doctor
- ▶ Check for safety hazards
- ▶ **Learn how to get up safely from your physical therapist**



<http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=getting+up+from+floor+with+chair+photo&view=detailv2&id=6078B0575525F1E0A63A99D372BE2F78F77BF411&selectedIndex=0&ccid=U1AEMRPq&simid=608013721659769884&thid=JN.I5Qt1AlQIz9v31ZkHSXKJg&ajaxhist=0>

Questions/Discussion



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Thank You for
Coming!

Need more information?

- ▶ A Physical Therapist's Guide to Falls:

<http://www.moveforwardpt.com/symptomsconditionsdetail.aspx?cid=85726fb6-14c4-4c16-9a4c-3736dceac9f0>

- ▶ Remaining in Your Home as you Age:

<https://www.aota.org/About-Occupational-Therapy/Patients-Clients/Adults.aspx>

- ▶ The AARP Home Fit Guide:

<http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/info-2014/aarp-home-fit-guide-aging-in-place.html>

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