



Fall Prevention for residents at Assisted Living Facilities and Senior Residences

Audience:

Residents at Assisted Living Facilities and Senior Residences

Goals:

1. Increased awareness regarding the causes of falls and steps to take to prevent falls
2. Audience members will learn how to personally prepare for emergencies
3. Audience members will learn what to expect if the facility needs to use its emergency operations plan

Materials:

- Fall prevention checklist
- Folder with safety information:
 - Personal Emergency Plan with contact numbers and list of scheduled assessments
 - File of Life and Smart911.com brochure
 - Illustration on how to get up from a fall
 - Home Safety Checklist from Fall Prevention Network
 - Illustration of Chair Rise Exercise
- Copy of Facility's Emergency Operation Plan

I. INTRODUCTION

- Introduce yourself and explain that you are there to address:
 - Common causes of falls
 - How to prevent falls
 - The facility's lift assist policy
 - When and how to try to get up from a fall
 - When to call for help
 - Personal emergency preparedness
 - What to expect if the need arises to use the facility's emergency operation plan

II. FALLS – common causes

- Falls are the most common, disabling and expensive health condition experienced by older adults.
 - Many factors predispose older people to falls, including unsteady gait and balance, weak muscles, poor vision, medications and dementia.
 - External factors include poor lighting, loose rugs, poorly fitting shoes, clutter and beds or toilets without handrails.
- Prevention Works!
 - Participating in fall prevention activities can reduce risk of falls, lessen threats to mobility and independence, and save lots of money in health care costs.
 - Identify fall risks
 - Address your fall risks
 - Fall prevention programs often have to address modifying existing practices at the facility level *and* at the individual level (you may have to make some changes in your behavior or in your home environment)
 - Know how to get up for a fall and when to call for help
 - Know your facility's lift assist policy
 - Participate in activities to lower the risk of falls
 - Use a home safety checklist
 - Have an annual balance assessment
 - Have your blood pressure checked and your medications reviewed so you know which medications will affect your balance
 - Have your vision checked regularly
 - Walk or exercise regularly if you are able
 - Attend safety and wellness events at your facility
- Preventing falls involves a multi-faceted approach to addressing the issues that increase the risk of falls.

III. ASSESS YOUR RISK for a fall

- Risk Assessment – know what increases your risk of falling and have regular assessments performed to identify those risk areas:

1. Balance and Gait

- Have an annual balance assessment done
- Identify any risks and hazards associated with balance and gait issues

2. Medication review and blood pressure check

- Multiple medication use is associated with an increased fall risk
- Talk to your doctor about all of the medications you take and discuss how they interact together and how they affect your balance and vision
- Record medications on the File of Life and create an individual safety profile online at www.smart911.com
- Consider using prepackaging services for medications (An example of this type of company is www.pillpack.com)

3. Vision

- Have vision checked regularly by a doctor
- Have adequate lighting and night lights to guide a path from the bed to the bathroom
- Make changes in levels of floors easily visible
 - Paint stripes on steps/stairs

IV. Exercise

- Regular exercise and strength training helps with balance and walking
 - Exercise at your facility if possible
 - Some strength training moves can be done with a chair in the home

V. Eliminate Tripping and Fall Hazards in your Home

1. Arrangement of furniture – should allow for ease of movement around the residence and not block exits
2. Have an unobstructed path for exiting the residence
 - a. Identify two ways out of the residence for emergency evacuation and make sure both ways have clear pathways
3. Eliminate tripping hazards
 - a. Clutter on floor
 - b. Cords
 - c. Area rugs
 - d. Clean up spills immediately
4. Have hand rails and grab bars to assist with balance and movement
5. Slip-resistant surfaces in the bathroom
6. Keep frequently used items within arm's reach (in kitchen and bathroom cabinets)

VI. Walk Safely

1. Footwear – should be appropriate for mobility, ability and environment
2. Pedestrian safety
 - a. Walk slowly
 - b. Walk in pairs or groups if possible
 - c. Avoid walking on ice or slippery surfaces
 - d. Be aware of any physical limitations pose as a safety hazard when walking in or near traffic
 - e. Cross the street at intersections, cross walks or designated areas

VII. Personal Emergency Preparedness

- **Individual Plan**

- Have a list of emergency phone numbers and contact information
- Have a completed File of Life at home and a pocket version for when you are out and about
- Create your own individual safety profile at www.smart911.com
- Have a “Ready to Go” kit in the event of an evacuation

VIII. Facility Emergency Operation Plan

- a. Review the written copy of your Facility’s Emergency Plan and explain when it is appropriate to:
 - i. Protect in place, or
 - ii. Evacuate
 - 1. Know your facility’s relocation plan and sites
 - 2. Let your family members or loved ones know where those relocation sites are
- b. Review your facility’s Lift Assist Policy:
 - i. When and how to try to get up from a fall (illustration)
 - ii. When to call for help

IX. Questions?

X. Closing and Thank audience for attending