

Fall Prevention In-service

Did you know that 1 in 3 older Americans fall every year? Falls are the leading cause of both fatal and nonfatal injuries for people aged 65+.

Falls can result in broken bones, bruises, abrasions, pain, and head injuries. Even falls without a major injury can cause an older adult to become fearful or depressed, making it difficult for them to stay active.

The good news about falls is that most of them can be prevented. The key is to know where to look. Here are some common factors that can lead to a fall:

- **Balance and gait:** As most people age, they lose some coordination, flexibility, and balance which makes it easier to fall.
- **Vision:** As most people age, their vision is decreased, making it easier to trip over obstacles in their path.
- **Medications:** Some medications can cause dizziness, dehydration, or sleepiness that can lead to a fall.
- **Environment:** Most people have their homes set up the way they wish, not realizing that clutter, cords, or rugs can cause a hazard and lead to falls.
- **Chronic Conditions:** Most older adults have chronic conditions such as diabetes, stroke, heart disease, lung disease, or arthritis which can lead to loss of function, inactivity, or pain which can contribute to falls.

How can you help to prevent falls?

- Watch your client and assist with transfers and ambulation as needed.
- Report to an SFC Office Team member if your client is having trouble ambulating/walking.
- Assist your client with Range of Motion or exercises.
- Talk to your client about removing obstacles in their home such as clutter, cords across paths, and throw rugs.
- Remind clients to use their assistive devices such as a walker or cane.
- Make sure the client's home is well lit, especially when they are walking.
- Encourage your client to take rest breaks as needed.
- Report to an SFC Office Team member any hazards in the home that may contribute to falling.
- Report any falls the client has to an SFC Office Team member
 - This includes falls that occur when you are in the home or not.
 - This also includes falls even if there is no injury.

You can be a major part of the plan to keep your clients safe. If you need assist with talking to your client about falls and ways to prevent them, talk to an SFC Office Team member at the office. We all wish to keep our clients safe and active for a long time.