



PREVENT. PROMOTE. PROTECT.

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NEWS

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Hamilton County Fall Prevention Task Force: Standing Together to Prevent Falls

HAMILTON COUNTY, OHIO – The first day of fall is September 22 and perhaps not so ironically, it’s also Fall Prevention Awareness Day.

“One out of three older adults will have a fall this year – and, not the pretty kind with colorful leaves,” according to Michael Tomes, Hamilton County Public Health education specialist. “Falls do not have to be part of the aging process if the right steps are taken to prevent them. Older adults, their children, doctors and the community can all play a role to prevent falls.”

The Hamilton County Fall Prevention Task Force, established in 2000 through a grant from the Ohio Department of Health, educates and facilitates resource sharing between groups that work with older adults. As 10,000 baby boomers across the country turn 65 every day, the need to educate older adults about fall prevention is critical.

The Fall Prevention Task Force recommends five simple ways to protect yourself or a loved one from falling:

1. **Increase your physical activity.** Simple exercise like walking or swimming at least 15 minutes-a-day can help build muscle strength and improve balance, which can prevent falls. Exercise programs like Tai Chi that increase strength and improve balance are especially good.

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2. **See your eye doctor once each year.** Age-related eye diseases, such as cataracts, macular degeneration and diabetic retinopathy, can increase the risk of falling. Early detection is key to minimizing the effects of these conditions.
3. **Review your medications.** Talk to your doctor or pharmacist about the medicines you are taking and whether they may cause drowsiness or dizziness. Discuss things you can do to ensure you are taking your medicines safely.
4. **Remove environmental hazards.** Look around the house for anything that could increase the risk of falls, including poor lighting, loose rugs, slippery floors, lack of handrails and unsteady furniture. Remove or modify these hazards.
5. **Think, plan and slow down.** Many falls are caused by hurrying. Slow down and think through the task you are performing. Be mindful of possible falls risks and act accordingly.

For more information about the Hamilton County Fall Prevention Task Force, please contact Michael Tomes at (513) 946-7813 or by e-mail at michael.tomes@hamilton-co.org.

Hamilton County Public Health works to assure the 460,000 citizens living outside the cities of Cincinnati, Norwood, Sharonville and Springdale are safe from disease, injury and contamination.

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