

FALL PREVENTION

FALL PREVENTION – DOESN'T HAVE TO BE A TABOO TOPIC

Falls are one of the leading causes of unintentional injuries in the United States, accounting for approximately 8.9 million visits to the emergency room annually. One in three people over the age of 65 falls each year, many times they are repeat falls.

For many, stability and lack of stability in an aging population is associated with decline in health and for many, it represents potential loss of independence, hence the taboo nature and sensitivity of this topic. Being at risk for falling does NOT have to mean loss of independence, when fall risks are identified before they pose a problem.

Taking the first step to prevent falls, will be your safest step.

What can you do to prevent falls? There are environmental modifiable fall risk factors, which can be addressed in the home: floors, stairs, lighting, safety grab bars, slippery tub or tile. If you are suffering from a medical condition, which causes loss of balance, vertigo or other side effects, which contribute to your risk of falling, those can be addressed as well. Musculoskeletal strengthening for



lower extremity weakness can decrease risk of falls, particularly in cases where there is weakness transitioning from positions such as sit to stand. The American and British Geriatric Societies state, "Multifactorial risk assessment and intervention strategies are effective in decreasing the rate of falls and have similar risk reduction to that of other prevention measures such as statins for cardiovascular disease".

Those caregivers, children of aging parents or individuals concerned they may be at risk for falling due to stroke, Parkinson's, recent hospitalization, etc. may seek to have a thorough, multi-factorial fall risk assessment performed to determine what areas need to be addressed in order to reduce the risk of falling. Taking the first step to prevent falls, will be your safest step.

Byline: Sandy Goldstein, licensed Physical Therapist and founder of MEASURAbilities, LLC, Physical Rehabilitation and Fall Prevention Services, combines his more than 15 years of Physical Therapy, Functional Testing, Ergonomics and Geriatric/Nursing home experience with Fall Prevention expertise in developing a unique, one-of-a-kind service in the valley. Goldstein offers Fall Risk Screenings and Fall Prevention Home Safety options, from strengthening to non-slip floor treatment. His passion is helping the aging population avoid unnecessary falls, while treating them like family!



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