


Fall Injury Prevention Coalition York, PA



Twelve local healthcare providers have formed a Fall Injury Prevention Coalition to address the issue of reducing the risk of falling for older adults. The coalition focuses on:

- ▲ raising public awareness of the impact falls have on the elderly
- ▲ educating health care providers to assess risk of falls in older adults
- ▲ providing information on home safety and fall hazard reduction
- ▲ supporting and promoting availability and accessibility of appropriate exercise programs

The Coalition is comprised of representatives from:

- Adams County Area Agency on Aging
- Chambersburg Hospital – an affiliate of Summit Health
- Crispus Attucks Association
- Franklin County Area Agency on Aging
- Hanover Healthcare Plus
- HEALTHSOUTH
- Rehabilitation Hospital of York
- Manor Care Health Services
- Memorial Health Systems
- Penn State Cooperative Extension
- VNA of York County
- York City Bureau of Health
- York County Area Agency on Aging
- York Health System
- York Housing Authority

For information about fall and injury prevention for the older adult, contact one of the following agencies:

- Adams County Office for Aging – (717) 33-9296
- Franklin County Area Agency on Aging – (717) 263-2153
- York County Area Agency on Aging – (717) 771-9610

Resources offered include: educational presentations, home safety check list, exercise tips and health fair displays.

FALL Injury Prevention COALITION

Fall Injury Prevention Coalition York, PA — *Continued*

Reducing the Risks

Research in the Harvard Health Letter (September 1996) indicates that risks for falls can be reduced by addressing safety in the home, clinical identification of an older patient at risk for falls and encouraging regular exercise to maintain gait and balance, flexibility and bone strength.

Diagnosing Your Risk for Falls

These are key to reducing your risk for falls



Make an appointment with your health care provider to:

- ▲ have your vision tested
- ▲ review the medications you are taking
- ▲ check your gait and balance



Limit your intake of alcoholic beverages

Practice safe movements that will prevent a fall

- ▲ lift objects properly
- ▲ learn proper body mechanics

Exercise regularly to keep limber

- ▲ stretching
- ▲ gardening
- ▲ walking



Identify and fix home safety hazards

- ▲ add non-skid treads in bath and shower
- ▲ eliminate throw rugs
- ▲ increase lighting in stairways
- ▲ reduce walkway clutter

Scope of the Challenge

Falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries in people age 65 and older. Complications resulting from falls are the largest single cause of death in the elderly. Although not all falls result in serious physical injury or death, they often cause older adults to lose their confidence, to lose their independence and to restrict their participation in social activities. Falls may increase their need for long-term care.

Recent statistics show:

- ▲ in older adults, injuries due to falls account for between 75 and 100 billion dollars each year in direct and indirect healthcare costs
- ▲ injury is the sixth leading cause of death among people over 65, and most of these fatal injuries are related to falls
- ▲ about 25 percent of persons aged 65 to 74 report a fall in any given year
- ▲ falls result in approximately 200,000 hip fractures in older adults each year