

HHA Training for Falls Prevention



ALL CARE RESOURCES
2024



Why is Falls Prevention Important?



- There is a high risk of falls among the elderly, many resulting in injury
- 1 out of 4 Americans age 65+ fall each year. of older adults fall each year, half of them fall more than once
- 60% of falls occur in the home, 30% in a public setting
- Falls are the leading cause of injury resulting in death among the elderly
- Falls are the second leading cause of spinal cord and brain injury
- Approximately \$34 billion a year is spent in health care costs

More Facts Related to Falls

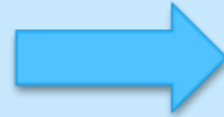


- 20% of falls result in broken bones
- **40%** of nursing home admissions are related to falls
- 50% of clients who live at home that are admitted to the hospital with a broken hip, die within **ONE** year

Medical Complications Related to Falls

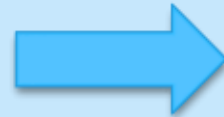


Falls



Immobility

Immobility



Complications

Pressure ulcers to the skin

Joint issues

Pneumonia

Decreased strength

Identifying Risk Factors



- Injuries from previous falls/fear of falling
- Incontinence
- Weakness/Unsteady Gait
- Hemiparesis (weakness on one side of the body)
- ** Drop in BP when standing up/dizziness
- Diabetes
- Poor Nutrition
- Lack of exercise/poor safety awareness/impulsiveness
- Trouble sleeping
- Visually impaired/ Cognitive impairment
- Taking 5 or more medications

Consequences of Falls



- Broken bones: Hip, pelvis, wrist, neck, spine, ribs, skull fractures
- Soft tissue injuries: 30-50% of falls cause hematomas (bruising, sprains, and dislocations)
- Head injuries: Elderly people are not always quick enough to extend an arm to break a fall. This makes the head very vulnerable
- Subdural hematomas (bleeding inside the brain) occur in 2% to 20% of all falls

Social Factors Can Affect Falls Risk



- Client that lives alone with little family support
- Impaired judgment/Alzheimer's
- Impulsive/Easily distracted
- Certain medications (Medications for BP, Pain, psychiatric, diabetic, and fluid pills)
- Alcohol use
- Not asking for help/not seeking medical attention
- Fear of falling
- Denial of aging process/disease process

Most slips and falls can be prevented in the home by taking simple precautions....



What YOU Can Do



- **When you first meet the client, ask the following questions:**
 1. Do you have trouble with your balance?
 2. Do you feel unsteady while walking?
 3. What makes your unsteadiness better or worse?
 4. Do you feel dizzy when you stand up?
- **Observe the following:**
 - How the person gets in and out of bed/toilet/from the chair
 - How the person walks and turns

Don't take the client's word on how steady he or she is

Where do most falls take place?



Bathroom



- Usually, bathrooms have a small area that contain the sink, toilet, and bathtub.
- Movement around these items can be difficult for someone with an assistive device
- The floor gets wet and depending on the floor color, water is not easily visualized.



Falls Prevention in the BR



- **Timed voidings:** Encourage your client to use the BR every few hours
- Ensure the **floor is always dry**
- Make sure all drawers and cabinet doors are *CLOSED*
- Assist the client into the bathroom
- **Use nonskid mats** where appropriate
- All clients must have a tub seat
- Wear *sturdy* footwear

*Pay attention to their ability to get on and off the toilet.
If you notice this to be difficult, call the HHA Manager*

Keep the Home Environment Safe



- Remove tripping hazards: Scatter rugs, items left on floor, appliance cords.
- Use non-slip mats
- Improve lighting
- Tub seat and grab bars in the bathroom
- Handrails on stairs
- Mark uneven flooring or stairs with colored tape
- Remember how PT and OT can help

What kinds of clothing can be *hazardous*?



- ▶ Long bathrobes and gowns
- ▶ Clothing that drags on the floor (weight loss)
- ▶ Ill-fitting shoes or slippers
- ▶ Footwear with little or no traction

Observe & Report Change that Could Lead to Falls



These changes should be reported to a HHA Manager:

- ▶ Dizziness, syncope (fainting)
- ▶ Changes in eating habits
- ▶ Decline in vigor, social interaction, ability to communicate
- ▶ Refusing to take medication
- ▶ Taking too much, too little medication, or mixing up medication.

Aides Play a Part in Preventing Patient Falls



- Remind the client not to get up unsupervised
- Keep assistive devices near the client at all times
- Keep personal items such as tissues, water within the client's reach
- Evaluate the client's environment for safety during care
- Report any changes in a patient's medical condition to the HHA Manager or Field Supervisor
- Keep brakes locked on wheelchairs when they are stationary
- Provide transfer and mobility assistance

What Should I do if the Client Begins to Fall



- Step behind the client in a wide stance and take one step back
- Grab the hip area of the client for support
- Bend one leg and place it between the client's legs
- Slide the patient down your leg, lowering yourself at the time to prevent back injuries. Always protect the patient's head.
- Report all client's falls to your HHA Manager

How To Assist the Client After a Fall



- Attempt to lower the person down
- DO NOT let the person pull you down with them
- DO NOT try to stop the fall
- Use good body mechanics, keep a wide stance and try to guide the person safely to the floor

Falls Prevention Education



Keeping Active: Regular exercise is vital

- Go slow with position changes
- Wear supportive footwear
- Use the cane or walker consistently
(if needed)
- Following the Home Exercise Program

Have medications reviewed at least yearly

- 4 or more meds = a higher risk of falls

Keep the Home Environment Safe

- Remove tripping hazards, improve lighting, install grab bars in BR, use non-slip mats, remove scattered rugs.

Falls Prevention Education



Stay Hydrated and Eat Well

- Water is the best beverage; drink 6-8 cups a day
- Include whole grains, protein, fruits and vegetables in the daily diet

Have Vision Checked Regularly

- May need a new lens prescription
- Early detection of eye problems: Glaucoma, cataracts, macular degeneration
- Keep glasses clean
- Wear glasses as prescribed