



**News
You Can
Use**



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Sheakley UniComp joins state coalition in observing Falls Prevention Awareness Day September 23, 2011

Sheakley UniComp will join with the Ohio Older Adult Falls Prevention Coalition to recognize Friday, September 23, 2011 as Falls Prevention Awareness Day and encourage all individuals to use the autumn season to educate themselves and their loved ones about the risk of falls and fall-related injury that increases as we age.

"Falls among older Ohioans can negatively affect the individual's health and sense of security, but also can have an impact on the entire family. We're using the first day of autumn to mark the beginning of an ongoing effort to help Ohioans become aware of the risks and do what they can to prevent them. Doing so will help our older neighbors remain safely in their homes and our community."

Five easy things you can do to prevent falls are:

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.
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 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.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 30 percent of adults age 65 and older living in the community, and more than half of all older adults who live in residential care facilities or nursing homes, fall each year. Falls are the leading cause of injury-related deaths and the most common cause of nonfatal injuries and hospital admissions for trauma in older adults. Risk factors for falls include poor health status, prescription drug interactions, impaired cognitive function, use of alcohol, history of falls and impaired vision.

Falls Prevention Awareness Day is promoted at the state level by the Ohio Departments of Aging and Health.