

Falls Prevention

How Library Staff Can Be Part of a Vital Team!

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Falls in Older Adults; How Bad Is It?

Its Bad!

Falls can be devastating! Costly! Fatal!

Today we will talk about:

- Statistics
- The Effects on Seniors
- Causes
- Prevention
- How Library Staff can be an important part of the solution to the problem.

Facts and Statistics

- Falls are the leading cause of death among Senior Adults (the second leading cause of death among all age groups!)
- 1/3 of Senior Adults fall each year
- Of those that fall, up to half will sustain moderate to severe injuries. This reduces mobility and independence.
- About 50% of Senior Adults will be hospitalized for a hip fracture. Most will never return to their prior level of functioning.
- Hip Fracture Patients are more likely to die within a year. 25% will be in a nursing home one year later.
- Over 2 million Seniors are treated in the ER for nonfatal falls.
- Direct Medical costs for fall injuries total over 34 billion dollars yearly.
- Falls and Fear of Falling contribute to a vicious cycle of further falls and complications.
- Those who fall are at least twice as likely to fall again.
- 1 in 5 falls result in serious injury.

Falls and Facts Continued

- ½ to 2/3 or all falls occur around the home
- A majority of falls will happen doing routine activities
- Falls are usually caused by more than one issue-a combination of many factors

➤ **A large portion of falls are preventable!**

*Most Statistical and Fact information from KSPAN and CDC

Falls Are an Important Public Health Problem!

Why? As already mentioned, they are costly! Lets look at Kentucky alone...

KSPAN says, "On average, 155 Kentuckians age 65 and older die each year from accidental falls.

1. Roughly, 1/3 of Seniors over the age of 65 fall each year, resulting in nearly 33,000 visits to Kentucky hospitals in 2010.
2. Falls result in the greatest total lifetime costs among adults in the US age 65 and older injured in 2000-more than \$34 billion-in 2000, these numbers were \$19 billion.
3. Falls are the leading cause of death from unintentional injuries among older adults and the leading cause of traumatic brain injury (TBI) among Kentucky residents age sixty-five and older.
4. Hospital charges for fall-related inpatient hospitalization involving Kentucky residents age sixty-five and older were \$266,239,369 in 2011, an increase of 275% in 2003."

The numbers continue to rise!

Who is at Risk for Falls?

- ✓ Those who are 65 and older. The risk increases as we get older.
- ✓ Those who have fallen before and also have a fear of falling.
- ✓ Those with vision impairment.
- ✓ Those who have Physical Limitations and with Disease.
- ✓ Those who use Alcohol.
- ✓ Those who use Alcohol and Medication.
- ✓ Those who take multiple Medications.
- ✓ Those who live in unsafe environments.
- ✓ Those who have cognitive impairment.
- ✓ Those who are not active.
- ✓ Those with Neuropathy.
- ✓ Women (although men have a higher percentage of death when they fall)

The Effects of Falls on Seniors

Falls are the main cause of death and disability for Seniors!

When a Senior Adult falls...

1. They often suffer from a loss of Independence.
2. They often have to go to Rehabilitation, and many go on to LTC.
3. Thereby often losing the comfort of living in their own home.
4. They often begin to have a Fear of Falling which leads to a decrease in activity and an increase in weakness, which leads to more falls; therefore the cycle begins.
5. They are usually affected financially.
6. Depression may follow Due to all of the above! Depression in Senior Adults is a whole other topic!

What Can You as Library Staff Do?

- ❖ Be a kind welcome to their home; you may be the only person they see that day
- ❖ Start a discussion with your Seniors...Mrs Brown, I heard you had a fall this week....
- ❖ Provide Education
- ❖ Provide Resources
- ❖ Host Presentations
- ❖ Provide Materials
- ❖ Host Health Fairs
- ❖ Offer Exercise Programs
- ❖ Offer Diet Programs
- ❖ Join Local Groups
- ❖ Be a resource and a leader to Seniors in their community
- ❖ Be a resource and a leader to facilities
- ❖ Honor National Falls Prevention Day

Education

There are many books, workbooks, and printed as well as online Education on Falls Awareness and Prevention. These materials can be shared with Patrons, Seniors at Home, Facilities, etc.

Here are some resources:

1. Books on Home Safety
2. Books on Falls Prevention
3. Books on Osteoporosis
4. Books on Building Strong Bones
5. Some Specific Books (I simply googled several topics-Falls Prevention, Falls Awareness, etc:)
 1. Building Bone Vitality
 2. Falls in Older People: Prevention and Management
 3. Preventing Patient Falls
 4. CDC, STEADI puts out a great [Falls Kit](#)

Education Continued

Resources for Printed and Online Materials: If you google any of these with Falls Prevention or Programs, it will lead you to a wealth of information on Falls.

1. KSPAN
2. Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
3. National Institute on Health (NIH)
4. Department of Health and Human Services
5. National Council on Aging (NCOA)
6. Mayo Clinic
7. Stop Falls.Org

Host Presentations

- Have a Pharmacist speak on the dangers of mixing medications and side effects and well as interactions with alcohol and OTC drugs.
- Have a Physical and Occupational Therapist talk about Home Safety.
- Have a Therapist present on Balance.
- Have a Home Modification Company discuss ways to modify their home for Safety.
- Have a Healthcare Provider, Nurse, Dr, discuss the importance of building bone strength.
- Have the Extension office discuss the programs they offer-many on balance, health eating, etc.
- Have Demonstrations on the Falls Prevention Programs (we will talk about these in a moment.)
- Others?

Host a Health Fair

The Library is a Wonderful Place to Host a Health Fair with Health Screenings! Vendors can set up booths with information, education, and screenings. In Owen County, I coordinate a Health Fair every October. This year it is open to all adults. Here are some of the things we will do:

1. Health Dept-Flu Shots
2. Hospital-Wound Care and Cardio Education
3. Home Health Group-Blood Pressures
4. Local Pharmacy-Medication Reviews
5. Weights
6. Blood Sugar Testing, etc.

You can make your Health Fair all around falls...

Balance Testing, Blood Pressures, Medication Reviews, Eyesight Screenings, Home Modification Vendors, Tai Chi Demonstrations, etc.

IF YOU WANT TO TAKE THIS INTO THE COMMUNITY OR FACILITY, ENLIST THE HELP OF THE ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR, DIRECTOR OF THE FACILITY, SENIOR CENTERS, CHURCHES, ETC.

Diet and Exercise Programs

Many Seniors will come to a library when they will not go to a Senior Center!

Offer Tai Chi, Matter of Balance Programs, Diabetic and Cardiac Education, etc. There a number of Hospitals, Home Care Companies, Physicians Groups, Health Departments that will partner with you to provide the Education.

You do not have to be the expert-you just have to align with those that are!

In the community, bring the resources to them.

1. Set up presentations on Diet and Exercise for facilities or give them the idea and the name of experts who will do the presentations.
2. Take books to the facilities and homebound on Diet, Exercise, and Falls Prevention.
3. Take printed materials to them on all the resources we are discussing today.
4. Work with the Care-givers to provide the resources they need to keep their loved ones safe.

Be a Part of Local Groups in Your Community that is Focusing on Safety and Falls Prevention

1. Contact KSPAN-Kentucky Safety and Prevention Alliance Network-and get the names of the coalitions across the state. For example:
 1. NKY-Safe Aging Coalition of NKY
 2. Western Ky-Barren River Healthy and Safe Aging Coalition
 3. Lexington-Bluegrass Area Development District.
2. Get to know your Council on Aging, Health Department, and Extension Offices in your Counties.
3. Attend your Council on Aging meetings.
4. Become a part of Local Networking Groups to see the services and resources available to Seniors and their families in your community.
5. Start your own Safety Council or Coalition in your area.

Honor/Celebrate Falls Prevention Day

In the State of Kentucky, and Countrywide, September 23 is **National Falls Prevention Day!** Celebrate by bringing awareness to the community. All of these things can be done in the library or facility, or in the home.

- Host a Health Fair and/or screening day
- Have a display for Falls Awareness and Prevention
- Offer Balance Programs that day or week
- Host some of the Presentations we discussed
- Take materials into the home and facilities that focus on this important matter

Some Program Resources for You

1. Matter of Balance-8 week group intervention that gives practical strategies to prevent falls.
2. STEADI-Program for Healthcare Providers to help assess their patients. Can be offered to facilities, Doctors, etc.
3. Farewell to Falls-Falls Prevention Program from Stanford through education.
4. FallsTalk-Individualized falls prevention using workbooks, etc. One-on-one.
5. FallsScape-Interventions using Video, customized with information from FallsTalk
6. Walk with Ease-From Arthritis Foundation, on-line walking program (also comes in a Mobile App)
7. Tai Chi-Martial Art that can ease Anxiety, Depression, Chronic Illness and Restore Balance. Muscle Strength, and increase energy.
8. SAIL (Stay Active and Independent for Life)-An intervention program that includes fitness for older adults and materials and self-assessments.
9. Bingocize-A combination of Bingo and Exercise, created by a professor and his students at WKU.
10. The Otago Exercise Program-Series of 17 Strength and Balance Exercises delivered by a Physical Therapist in the home. (Newer Program)
11. Go4life-NIA-program to improve strength, balance, flexibility, and endurance. They have DVDs. Books, Instructions etc.

Conclusion

FALLS ARE SERIOUS! THEY ARE COSTLY, DEVASTATING, AND CAN BE FATAL.

You have the opportunity to be an intricate part of the solution to this epidemic!

*Through Education, Demonstration, and Providing Resources, you can join
the Kentucky Coalition and the World at large in saving Lives!*

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