



NEWS COLUMN – Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

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Falls Prevention Tips for the Winter

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Did you know that one in three older Ohioans will fall this year? The snow and ice of an Ohio winter can surely increase those odds. The good news is that most falls can be prevented by understanding your risk factors and being more aware of your surroundings.

The Area Agency on Aging District 7 (AAA7) is proud to partner with STEADY U Ohio, the state's falls prevention initiative, and offers these tips to help you "win winter" by preventing falls:

- **Dress Defensively** – Bundle up, but make sure you can see in all directions and move easily and freely. Wear sturdy shoes or boots with good treads. Wear sunglasses to reduce glare on surfaces.
- **Walk Wisely** – Slow down and pay attention to how and where you're walking. Allow extra time to get to where you're going. Keep sidewalks and stairs outside your home clean of ice and snow, and keep cords and clutter out of walkways inside.
- **Pack Power** – Carry a small baggie of salt, sand or kitty litter in your coat for traction on icy paths. Replace worn rubber tips on canes, walkers and crutches.
- **Keep Connected** – Carry a cell phone and designate someone to call for help if you need it. Let loved ones know when you are leaving the house and when you expect to be back; call them after you return home.
- **Healthy Habits** – Do some light stretching before you venture out. Drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration, which can affect your balance. Stay active all winter to maintain strength and balance.

Find a wealth of tips to help prevent falls in all aspects of life at the STEADY U Ohio website, www.steadyu.ohio.gov. Take the online Falls Risk Self-Assessment and learn about A Matter of Balance, a free program to help older adults learn to see falls as something they can control. The AAA7 is proud to offer a Matter of Balance to our local communities – contact our office at 1-800-582-7277 to learn more about programs close to you.

To learn more about long-term care home and community-based services and programs in your community, call us at 1-800-582-7277 or e-mail to info@aaa7.org.

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