



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

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**AAA7 and Shawnee State University “Fall-Free Fridays”
Episode Features Information About “Fall-ty” Habits**

According to the National Council on Aging, falls remain a leading cause of injury for people aged 65 and older. Falls threaten older adults’ safety and independence and generate enormous economic and personal costs. The good news is that they are preventable and there are proven steps people can take to reduce their risk.

The Area Agency on Aging District 7 (AAA7) recently began featuring “Fall-Free Fridays”, a live, weekly interview with two Shawnee State University (SSU) Occupational Therapy graduate students who provide community education on a falls-related topic and information about falls, risk factors, and helpful prevention tips. The series takes place every Friday at 10:00 am through December 11th on the AAA7 Facebook page.

The last episode on October 23rd featured the topic “Fall-ty Habits – Everyday Activities”, presented by SSU Master of Occupational Therapy (OT) students Bridget Feldmann and Drew Pool.

The students shared information about what occupational therapists do and what their goal is in helping people engage in their everyday activities.

The education featured a discussion on habits that can occur during everyday activities that could increase the risk of a fall. Some may not be aware that their daily habits could increase their chance of falling. Exercise is a positive habit to help prevent falls. This can include activities such as weight shifting, one-leg balance, and heel-to-toe walking. This can help with strength, balance and stamina. Exercising at least three to five times per week can be very beneficial to preventing your risk of a fall.

Bad habits can increase the risk of falls. These can include not taking a break getting up from a bed or chair. This can cause dizziness as your blood pressure tries to adjust. Changes in the height or angle of your walking path can also cause a fall. Carrying things, such as the laundry, up and down the stairs can also increase your fall risk as well as multi-tasking. Keeping hands free and wearing good and comfortable shoes with a non-slip sole can help reduce your chance of a fall.

Some basic ways to stay active and healthy to prevent falls include:

- 1) Fifteen minutes of simple exercise each day.

- 2) Joining a balance exercise program, like “Tai Chi” or “A Matter of Balance”.
- 3) Asking your healthcare provider for a Falls Risk Assessment. This will help identify specific concerns for you surrounding falls.
- 4) Regularly reviewing your medicines with your doctor or pharmacist.
- 5) Having your vision and hearing checked annually.
- 6) Slowing down and thinking through your tasks – be mindful of possible risks.
- 7) Staying hydrated with water.
- 8) Eating a balanced diet – this can help reduce inflammation that can make it easier on joints.

The students stressed that when it comes to changing habits, it is important to take one step at a time so that the likelihood of staying with the new habit increases. It takes thirty days to break an old habit and change a new one. Working on new habits every day helps you stay with them. It is also beneficial to make one change at a time and not many changes at once. Making too many changes at once will decrease your chances of being successful in making them.

If you missed the episode, the broadcast can be viewed by watching a recorded version that is available on the AAA7’s Facebook page or at the AAA7’s website at www.aaa7.org. At the Home Page, find the “Fall-Free Fridays” promotional ad and then find the “October 23rd” episode information.

The AAA7 and SSU OT students are also offering Falls Prevention Coaching for anyone who is interested. To learn more about the coaching, please call Hannah Hollingshead at the AAA7 at 1-800-582-7277, extension 247 or e-mail info@aaa7.org. The coaching can take place over the phone or through a virtual format.

The next Fall-Free Fridays episode on Friday, October 30th at 10:00 am will feature the topic of “What’s On Your Mind Matters! Thoughts and Beliefs About Falls”. Two new SSU Master of Occupational Therapy students will present on the topic and be available for questions during the live presentation.

For more information about Fall-Free Fridays, call the AAA7 at 1-800-582-7277 or info@aaa7.org, or Dr. Christine Raber with the Shawnee State University Occupational Therapy Program at (740) 351-3530 or craber@shawnee.edu.

Your local Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. provides services on a non-discriminatory basis. These services are available to help older adults and those with disabilities live safely and independently in their own homes through services paid for by Medicare, Medicaid, other federal and state resources, as well as private pay. The AAA7’s Resource Center is also available to anyone in the community looking for information or assistance with long-term care options. Available Monday through Friday from 8:00 am until 4:30 pm, the Resource Center is a valuable contact for learning more about options and what programs and services are available for assistance.

Those interested in learning more can call toll-free at 1-800-582-7277 (TTY: 711). Here, individuals can speak directly with a specially-trained Resource Specialist who will assist them with information surrounding the programs and services that are available to best serve their needs. The Agency also offers an in-home assessment at no cost for those who are interested in learning more. Information is also available on www.aaa7.org, or the Agency can be contacted through e-mail at info@aaa7.org. The Agency also has a Facebook page located at www.facebook.com/AreaAgencyOnAgingDistrict7.

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Fall-Free Fridays
with the Area Agency on Aging District 7 and
Shawnee State University Occupational Therapy Program
Fridays at 10:00 am
Now through
December 11th
AAA7 Facebook Page

FALLS
Prevention
Awareness

The graphic is a rectangular box with a red border. The background is a light blue map of Ohio. The text is arranged in a clean, sans-serif font. The word 'FALLS' is written in large, bold, green letters, with a red stick figure falling into the 'A'. Below it, 'Prevention Awareness' is written in red. The event details are listed in black text on the left side of the box.