



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

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**Falls Prevention**

**Nina R. Keller, Executive Director, Area Agency on Aging District 7**

**September 2021 Column**

The AAA7 is joining the Ohio Department of Aging in recognizing September as Falls Prevention Awareness Month.

Did you know that many falls are preventable? If you are caring for someone, below are six steps from the National Council on Aging that you can take today to help your loved one reduce their risk of a fall.



- 1) **Enlist their support in taking simple steps to stay safe.** Ask your older loved one if they are concerned about falling, dizziness, or balance. If so, suggest they discuss this with their healthcare provider who can assess their risk and suggest programs or services that could help.
- 2) **Discuss their current health conditions.** Encourage them to speak openly with their healthcare provider about all of their concerns.
- 3) **Ask about their last eye checkup** and make sure they have a current prescription and that they are using the glasses as advised by their eye doctor. Also remember that using tint-changing lenses can be hazardous when going from bright sun into darkened buildings and homes.
- 4) **Notice if they are holding onto walls, furniture, or someone else when walking, or if they appear to have difficulty walking or arising from a chair.** These are signs that they may need to see a physical therapist who can help them improve their balance, strength, and gait through exercise.
- 5) **Talk about their medications** and encourage them to discuss their concerns with their doctor and pharmacist. Some medications can lead to balance issues and dizziness.
- 6) **Do a walk-through safety assessment of the home.** There are many simple and inexpensive ways to make a home safer surrounding lighting, stairs, and bathrooms. An Occupational Therapist is a healthcare professional who can assist with ways to make your home safer and ways to help prevent falls.

Falling is not a normal part of aging, and most falls can be prevented. By knowing and managing your risk factors, you can live a full and active life free of the fear of falling. For more information about falls prevention resources in your area, call our Wellness Department at 1-800-582-7277 or e-mail [info@aaa7.org](mailto:info@aaa7.org).

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