



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

Release Date: Tuesday, October 20, 2020

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AAA7 and Shawnee State University “Fall-Free Fridays”
Episode Features Information About Exercise

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 4th on the AAA7 Facebook page.

The last episode on October 16th featured the topic “Exercise is the Best Medicine”, presented by SSU Master of Occupational Therapy (OT) students Kaelynn Ellis and Cassie Link.

The students shared information about what occupational therapists do and what their goal is in helping people engage in activities that they want or need to do in a variety of community settings.

The education featured exercise and how it is the best medicine to prevent falls. Research shows that exercise is the strongest action that you can do to prevent having a fall.

As we age, we lose muscle and flexibility. Exercising can help slow down that process and provide the benefit of a lower risk of falling. Although some may think limiting activity will decrease your chances of falling, it can actually hurt you more than help. Keeping your body moving with physical activities helps you maintain strength and flexibility. If you “don’t use it, you will lose it”, so work to maintain this with small exercises and activity.

Walking is a simple and effective way to stay active. Taking a walk for 15 minutes a day will help increase muscle strength and balance. To stay healthy while walking, always make sure you wear appropriate footwear that is flat and comfortable with non-slip soles.

Exercising safely at home is also another important option to stay healthy. Keep from wearing restricting clothing and always talk with your doctor about the best exercises for your body.

The students shared examples of exercises to do at home from a seated or standing position. These included shoulder shrugs, arm circles, side bends, sit and reach, pendulum swings, disco arm, tummy twist, seated knee lifts, and seated shin lifts. You can also do lunges or use light weights or something simple around the house like a water bottle to utilize as a makeshift weight. Always consult your doctor for exercise recommendations specific to you. Online classes are also an option that can be found by searching the internet.

If you missed the episode, the exercise examples can be viewed by watching a recorded version of the broadcast 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 16th" 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 23rd at 10:00 am will feature the topic of "Fall-ty Habits". 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
from September 11th
through December 4th**

AAA7 Facebook Page

