Preventing Falls and Fractures
Self-Help Class
Description

- Basic 1 hour group class
- Includes risk factors, self-assessment, home checklist, preventative interventions and instructions on reporting falls.

Patient Objectives

- Increase awareness of risk factors
- Assess personal level of risk
- Increase knowledge of risk reducing behaviors
- Decrease incidence of falls

System Objectives

- Identify patients at risk
- Increase risk reducing behaviors
- Refer high risk patients for appropriate follow-up
- Decrease incidence of falls
Supplies

- Name tags
- Marker board or pad and easel
- Markers
- Overhead projector
- Patient packets

Teaching Instructions

- Suggested script provided as a guide
- Teaching tips appear in parenthesis
- Please ask participants to complete a satisfaction survey at the end of class
- Please complete and send to case manager:
  - Class roster
  - Patient report
  - Self-test
PREVENTING FALLS AND FRACTURES

Long Term Care Authority of Tulsa
More than just a tumble... 

- 6th leading cause of death for > 65
- 20% of all hospitalizations
- Of those admitted to hospitals, 50% will not be alive in 1 year
- 1/2 who are injured will be discharged to a nursing home
- Among those who are independent at the time of fracture, 25% are still in nursing homes 1 year later
Risk Factors

- Fallen before
- Fear of Falling
- Problems with walking and balance
- Improper use of walkers and canes
- Leg weakness
- Hazards at home
- Certain medicines
- Health factors
Health Factors

- Vision Problems
- Hearing problems
- Medicines
- Problems with bones, joints and muscles – osteoporosis, arthritis, back trouble, post-polio, foot disorders, Parkinson’s
- Heart disease and stroke
- Dizziness – inner ear, anemia, low BP
- Leaking urine, especially at night
- Dementias
Are you at risk?

- Self-test
- Home check
What you can do

- Medical Checkups
- Exercise
- Home Safety
- Common Sense
Medical Checkups

- Chronic diseases
- Acute illness
- Vision check
- Hearing check
- Medications
- Assistive devices – canes, walkers, wheelchairs
Exercise

- General fitness
- Strength training
- Flexibility
- Tai Chi
- Physical Therapy
**Home Safety**

**Lighting**

- 4100-200 watt bulbs
- Reduce glare – halogen or fluorescent bulbs, lamp shades, polarized glass
- Light pathways and stairwells with switches at both ends
- Bedside lamp
- Night lights, flashlights
**Home Safety**

**Flooring**

- Avoid highly polished surfaces such as glazed tiles and smooth vinyl
- Carpet should be low pile and tightly woven in a solid color that contrasts with walls
- No loose edges on any flooring
- No throws or area rugs
HOME SAFETY

All living areas

- Free of clutter
- Pathways free of cords
- Storage areas easily reached without tip-toeing or climbing
- Sturdy step stools with handles and slip resistant tread
- Thresholds do not present trip hazard
- Rails on both sides of all stairs and steps
HOME SAFETY

Furniture

- Out of pathways
- Couches and chairs easy to get in and out of
- Chairs have armrests
- Chairs do not have wheels
- Avoid pedestal tables
HOME SAFETY

Bathrooms
- Grab bars
- Elevated toilet seat or safety frame
- Non-skid mats, abrasive strips or carpet on all surfaces that can get wet
- Shower chair

Bedrooms
- Bed side lamp
- Bed side telephone
- Bed height so that both feet are firmly planted when seated on the edge
- Wheels removed or locked
- Clear pathway to bathroom
HOME SAFETY

Outside

- Lighted pathways and steps
- Doorways, porches, walkways, steps, and railings in good repair and free of plants and debris
- Ladders used safely (or better yet, not at all)
- Non-skid surfacing in areas that could get wet

General Tips

- Sturdy non-slip shoes or slippers
- Frequently used items at waist level
- Reachers or grabbers to get things above your head
- Limit alcohol
Common Sense

- Follow medical advice
- Avoid slippery surfaces
- Do not climb
- Get up slowly
- Keep nighttime temperatures in the home above 65 degrees
- Carry a cordless telephone
- Never move about the house in the dark
- If you live alone, consider Lifeline
If you fall . . .

- Call 911 if you suspect serious injury
- Report ALL falls to your doctor:

  SPLATT
  Symptoms at the time of fall
  Previous number of falls or near falls
  Location of fall
  Activity engaged in at time of the fall
  Time of the fall
  Trauma from the fall
Summary

- Know your risk factors
- Do a home safety check
- Get medical check-ups and follow your doctor’s advice
- Exercise
- Use common sense
- Report ALL falls, SPLATT
- Consider Lifeline