



The Truth About Falls

 Did you know that one in three community-dwelling Americans aged 65 and older falls each year? Or that nearly 30% of those who fall require medical treatment? According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), \$19 billion is spent every year in the U.S. just to treat injuries related to falls. These injuries can range from simple bruises to hip fractures or head traumas, resulting in costs of \$12 billion annually for hospitalizations, \$4 billion for ER visits, and \$3 billion for outpatient care. In Massachusetts alone, 150 people age 65 and older go to the hospital every day because of falls, according to the MA Department of Public Health.

The fear of falling can have a profound effect on an elder's quality of life. Rather than risk a fall, many older adults curtail their activities, which can lead to an increase in social isolation and a decline in physical strength and mobility. In fact, such declines can actually increase the risk of falling.

Preventing falls in older adults has emerged as a critical and complex issue for public health advocates, policy makers, and researchers, and in April 2008, Congress enacted the Safety of Seniors Act. This legislation calls for an extensive national education campaign to bring strategies for falls prevention into the public arena. Funding has yet to be appropriated, however, and the Falls Free Coalition Advocacy Work Group has called on Congress to provide \$20.7 million in FY09 to the CDC to implement the legislation. 

RESOURCES FOR FALLS SAFETY

To request a copy of Sherrill House's home safety tips booklet, please email mmuccioli@SherrillHouse.org, or call 617.731.2400, ext. 3048.

Boston Elder Info: www.elderinfo.org or 617.292.6211

Boston Visiting Nurse Association: www.bostonvna.org

Minnesota has an easy-to-use falls prevention website: www.mnfallsprevention.org

Sherrill House to Host a Falls Prevention Program

Falls are *not* a normal part of aging, and many falls are avoidable. Please join us on Wednesday, March 11 at 5:30 p.m. for a special falls prevention program, **Reducing Falls Risks - One Step at a Time**. Our presenter will be falls expert Karyn Rizzo, RN, CHPN, GCNS, Director of Clinical Programs at Dovetail Health. Ms. Rizzo's areas of interest include geriatrics, pain management, and end-of-life care. She is an active member of the RI Falls Prevention Task Force. RSVP by emailing rsvp@SherrillHouse.org, or call 617.731.2400, ext. 3048.


SIMPLE TIPS TO HELP REDUCE YOUR RISK OF FALLING

Exercise, including walking, can improve your balance and strength. Talk with your doctor about the best exercise for you.

Review your medications with your doctor or pharmacist. Some combinations of medications can make you feel dizzy or unsteady.

Have your vision checked regularly.

Is your house safe? Check for tripping hazards like scatter rugs, and be sure that lighting is adequate.

Take extra precautions during the winter months. Be sure your footwear will provide adequate traction on slippery surfaces, and use a cane when necessary. Make arrangements to have ice and snow removed from your walkways. 



Improving Your Health & Balance

Tai Chi, a centuries-old Chinese exercise program, features slow, deliberate movements that can improve balance and agility and relieve stress. Check your local adult education program or health club for classes in your area.



To Keep You Better Informed

Sherrill House is expanding its e-system. If you would like to receive e-mail notification of upcoming events and programs, please send us a message at confirm@SherrillHouse.org.

BYLINES is an official publication of Sherrill House, a not-for-profit skilled nursing and rehabilitation center dedicated to providing innovative medical and nursing care and support to residents and their families. We welcome your questions and suggestions.

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Lewy Body Support Group

Sherrill House is proud to sponsor the only Lewy Body Caregiver Support Group in Massachusetts. This group meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Grande Room. Please contact Melissa Muccioli at 617.731.2400 or mmuccioli@SherrillHouse.org for more information. We are grateful to volunteer and leader Victoria Ruff for her dedication to this group.

Video Games and Equipment Needed

. . . for the Wii video game system used by patients in our rehabilitation therapy program. Please see the "Wish List" below. For more information, email mmuccioli@SherrillHouse.org. Thank you.

Rehabilitation Therapy Department Wish List

We would welcome Wii games and equipment, such as:

Wii Nunchuk Controllers
 Nintendo Wii Fit
 or 5-in-1 Fitness Bundle

Big Brain Academy:
 Wii Degree

Deca Sports for
 Nintendo Wii

SAVE THE DATES

Wednesday
MARCH 11 at 5:30 p.m.
REDUCING FALLS RISKS – ONE STEP AT A TIME
 A special falls prevention program

Speaker:
 Karyn Rizzo, RN, CHPN, GCNS

To register for this event, call
 617.731.2400 x 3048 or email
rsvp@SherrillHouse.org.

Greater Boston Area
LEWY BODY DEMENTIA CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

3rd Wednesday of each month
 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM
 The Grande Room at Sherrill House

D A T E D M A T E R I A L

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