

TIPS TO PREVENT NURSING HOME FALLS



KNOW AT-RISK PATIENTS

Nursing home staff should be knowledgeable about which nursing home residents have conditions such as muscle weakness and walking or gait problems. In addition, staff should be aware of medications residents take that could put residents at risk of falls.

MONITORED ACTIVITIES

Physical activity is a key element in fall prevention. Activities such as walking, water workouts, dancing or other gentle exercises improve strength, balance, coordination and flexibility. Avoiding physical activity because out of fear will likely lead to more falls. Under a doctor's direction, allowing patients to stay active will prevent falls.



CONSIDER FOOTWEAR

Sensible shoes are an important part of fall prevention. High heels, floppy slippers and slick-sole shoes can lead to slip and falls. Assuring residents are wearing properly fitting, sturdy shoes with nonskid soles will contribute to balance. Bonus: good shoes aid in reducing joint pain.

REMOVE HAZARDS

Facilities should keep trip, slip or fall hazards at bay by clearing walkways and high traffic areas of clutter. In addition, secure loose rugs and repair loose floorboards and carpeting immediately upon noticing poor condition. Clothing, dishes and other necessities should be stored within easy reach. Clean spilled liquids such as grease or food right away. Also, using nonslip mats in bath tubs or showers will reduce bathroom slip and falls.



ADJUST LIGHTING

By ensuring every room bright, residents can avoid tripping over objects that are hard to see. Nursing homes should have clear paths to light switches that aren't near room entrances. If stairs are in the facility, make sure lights are on. Residents should also have access to flashlights in easy-to-find places in the event of a power outage.

ASSISTING DEVICES

Using a cane, walking stick or walker will help you feel steadier when you walk. Assisted walking is especially important when you are walking in unfamiliar places. In addition, walking on wet or icy surfaces can be very dangerous. Installing grab bars in showers and grab bars in bathrooms can also help keep residents secure.



Nursing homes and those caring for elderly patients should do everything they can to prevent falls among the elderly. This can help seniors avoid debilitating injuries such as vision loss.

Fall Prevention In Nursing Homes Handout

Léo Pomar



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