

STAY A STEP AHEAD OF THE FALL



Fall Prevention Starts Before the Fall

When people think about falls, they often focus on what happens afterward — emergency rooms, broken bones, surgeries, and recovery. During Trauma Awareness Month, we want to shift the focus to something even more important: preventing the fall before it happens.

Falls are one of the leading causes of traumatic injury in older adults, and many of these injuries can change a person's independence, mobility, and quality of life.



The good news?

Many falls are preventable with small, proactive steps taken every day. Being proactive does not have to be overwhelming. Small improvements can make a major difference in safety!

Prevention is Powerful

Too often, safety changes happen after someone experiences a fall. Installing grab bars, improving lighting, or starting balance exercises frequently become a reaction to an injury rather than a strategy to prevent one.

Fall prevention works best when we act early!

Making simple changes now can help:

- Prevent traumatic injuries like hip fractures and head injuries
- Reduce hospital visits and lengthy recovery periods
- Maintain independence and confidence
- Keep older adults active and engaged in their daily lives



Take Action Before a Fall Happens

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 Small improvements can make a major difference in safety.

Home Prevention

- Remove loose rugs and clutter from walkways
- Improve lighting in hallways, bedrooms, and bathrooms
- Install grab bars and handrails before they are needed
- Keep frequently used items within easy reach
- Wear supportive, non-slip footwear indoors and outdoors

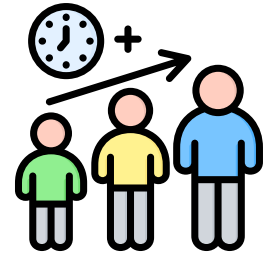
Health Prevention

- Stay physically active to maintain strength and balance
- Have regular vision and hearing checkups
- Review medications with your healthcare provider
- Stay hydrated and eat nutritious meals
- Talk to your doctor about dizziness or balance concerns early

Falls Are Not a Normal Part of Aging

Many people believe falls are simply part of getting older, but that is not true. While fall risk may increase with age, there are many ways to reduce that risk and stay safe.

Preventing falls is not about limiting activity, it is about staying healthy, confident, and independent.



Trauma Prevention Starts in the Community

Every proactive step matters. Families, caregivers, healthcare providers, and community organizations all play a role in preventing injuries before they occur.

This Trauma Awareness Month, challenge yourself or a loved one to make one preventive change at home. A brighter lightbulb, a cleared walkway, or a new exercise routine may seem small, but those steps can help prevent a life-changing injury later.



The best trauma care is prevention!

Move for Safety: Simple Exercises to Prevent Falls

Improving strength and balance is one of the best ways to prevent falls. Try incorporating these simple exercises into your routine!



1. Seated Knee Extensions: Strengthens thigh muscles to improve walking

- Sit tall in a sturdy chair
- Slowly straighten one leg until it is level with the floor, hold for 3-5 seconds and slowly lower it back to the ground
- Alternate legs, repeat 10 times each side



2. Side Leg Raises: Improves hip strength and balance

- Stand behind a chair and hold on for support
- Slowly lift one leg out to the side without leaning your body, pause briefly and then lower slowly
- Alternate sides, repeat 10 times each side



3. Seated Balloon Volleyball: Encourages coordination, reaction time, and upper-body movement

- Use an inflated balloon and try to keep it in the air
- This can be done seated or standing based on comfort level
- Complete for 60 seconds



4. Clock Reach Exercise: Improves balance and shift of weight.

- Stand behind a sturdy chair.
- Imagine standing in the center of a clock and slowly reach one foot forward to “12 o’clock”, then side to “3 o’clock” and then to “6 o’clock”
- Repeat 5 times on each side.



5. Grip and Release Hand Exercise: Maintains hand strength for safer use of walker, canes and railings.

- Squeeze a soft ball or rolled towel and hold for 3 seconds and then slowly release.
- Open fingers wide between squeezes.
- Repeat on each hand 10 times.

Stay connected by checking out our website!

www.themanateecountyfallspreventioncoalition.org