

PHYSICIANS HOME VISITS

COMPREHENSIVE QUALITY HEALTHCARE

September 2013



Seniors living healthy.

Preventing Falls

Some think falls are an expected part of aging; but they don't have to be. Here are **SIX** ways to prevent a fall:

1 Start a good balance and exercise program – Look to build balance, strength, and flexibility. While we do lose muscle as we age, exercise can partially restore strength and flexibility. Start slowly, stroll or roll! Need a resource? Call our local Area Agency on Aging for referrals— 336-761-2111.



2 Talk to your healthcare provider – Your Physicians Home Visits Healthcare Provider will assess your risk of falling. Our providers will discuss your history of falls; examine you physically for gait, balance and mobility levels, and neurological function. They'll also look at the type shoes you are wearing for potential risks.

3 Regularly review your medications with your doctor or pharmacist – As part of our routine services, your Physicians Home Visits provider will regularly review your medications for medication interactions, and reconcile your medications after a hospital stay to

insure you are taking the proper medications and doses.

4 Get your vision and hearing checked annually and update your eyeglasses – Your eyes and ears are key to keeping you on your feet. Your Physicians Home Visits provider is happy to make referrals for you if you don't already have an eye or ear doctor.

5 Keep your home safe – Over half of falls take place at home. Remove tripping hazards such as cords and throw rugs, increase lighting, remove clutter, make stairs safe, use non-slip paint on outdoor steps, and install grab bars in key areas. One of the advantages to having Physicians Home Visits as your primary care provider, we see you in your home environment where we are always vigilant to hazards to your health and wellness.

6 Talk to your family members – Enlist their support in taking simple steps to stay safe. Falls are not just a seniors' issue.



The Fall-Out on Falls—Startling Statistics on Stumbling

How costly are fall-related injuries among older adults?

- In 2000, the total direct medical costs of all fall injuries for people 65 and older exceeded \$19 billion: \$0.2 billion for fatal falls, and \$19 billion for nonfatal falls.
- By 2020, the annual direct and indirect cost of fall injuries is expected to reach \$54.9 billion (in 2007 dollars).
- Among community-dwelling older adults, fall-related injury is one of the 20 most expensive medical conditions.
- In 2002, about 22% of community-dwelling seniors reported falling in the previous year. Medicare costs per fall averaged between \$9,113 and \$13,507.
- Among community-dwelling seniors treated for fall injuries, 65% of direct medical costs were for inpatient hospitalizations; 10% each for medical office visits and home health care, 8% for hospital outpatient visits, 7% for emergency room visits, and 1% each for prescription drugs and dental visits. About 78% of these costs were reimbursed by Medicare.
- In a study of people age 72 and older, the average health care cost of a fall injury totaled \$19,440, which included hospital, nursing home, emergency room, and home health care, but not doctors' services.

How do these costs break down?

Age and sex:

- The costs of fall injuries increase rapidly with age.
- In 2000, the costs of both fatal and nonfatal falls were higher for women than for men.
- In 2000, medical costs for women, who comprised 58% of older adults, were two to three times higher than the costs for men.



*Have a beautiful and fall-safe Fall.
Happy Autumn!*

Consequences of Falls

- 50% of those who fall are unable to get up after, resulting in dehydration, rhabdomyolysis (a breakdown of muscle fibers that leads to the release of muscle fiber contents, myoglobin, into the bloodstream; myoglobin is harmful to the kidney and often causes kidney damage), pressure sores, pneumonia.
- Restriction of activity, further decrease in physical fitness and functional decline.
- Social withdrawal, loss of independence, and depression.

National Fall Prevention Day—September 22, 2013

Community Connection

Each Fall, the Triad retirement Living Association (TRLA) celebrates caregivers with the Elder Caregiver of the Year Award. Physicians Home Visits is a proud sponsor each year. Here, Melissa Carter, Marketing Director, and Tim Flavin, Executive Director, participate with our booth depicting our Guilford County primary care providers.



Contact Us
We would like to hear from you!
If you have any questions or
suggestions, please let us know.
Mail: Physicians Home Visits
3069 Trenwest Drive, Suite 200
Winston-Salem, NC 27103
Phone: 336-993-3146
Fax: 336-992-3930
Email: Info@myhomevisits.com
www.myhomevisits.com



Physicians Home Visits is a team of physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses and clinical assistants providing primary care for seniors throughout the Piedmont region of North Carolina. We provide comprehensive healthcare centered upon the patient as a whole person. We want to prevent illnesses, promote wellness, provide acute care and manage chronic illnesses, ensuring the patient and caregivers are fully informed in their care plan. In all cases, we use evidence-based medicine and clinical support tools to guide the decisions the patient and their family must make.



Coming home to you.

Physicians Home Visits
Office hours Monday—Friday, 9am—5pm
336-993-3146 · after hours on call
www.myhomevisits.com
