

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS**  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

**Vision:** To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
September 22, 2014

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## **FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ENCOURAGES PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ON FALLS PREVENTION AWARENESS DAY**

**TALLAHASSEE** – The Florida Department of Health recognizes September 23 as Falls Prevention Awareness Day and reminds Florida’s residents and visitors that most falls can be prevented. To help reduce the risk of falling many health departments, trauma centers, emergency medical services, area agencies on aging and other community organizations have partnered to provide falls prevention awareness events and classes during the month of September.

“Our goal is to prevent falls as a team effort through education, awareness and interventions,” said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. “Remaining physically active, managing your medications, having your vision checked and making your living environment safer are all steps you can take to stay healthy and prevent a fall.”

Many community organizations, including county health departments, are providing Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance (TCMBB) community classes. The TCMBB is an evidence-based best practice recognized by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for the prevention of older adult falls. The Department has also given \$5,000 grants to the Volusia county YMCA, Area Agencies on Aging in Palm Beach and Southwest Florida, and Departments of Health in Liberty, Calhoun and Gulf counties to offer community Tai Chi classes.

The Department is also part of the national Falls Free initiative, which includes more than 43 states and 70 national organizations, professional associations and federal agencies across the country. The goal is to reduce fall-related injuries and deaths and highlight the important roles professionals, older adults, caregivers and family members play in raising awareness and preventing falls in the older adult population.

Falls are the leading cause of death resulting from injury among Florida residents ages 65 years and older and the fourth-leading cause of death resulting from injury for all age groups. Most falls can be prevented with the right precautions and there are many falls prevention programs available to assist such as A Matter of Balance, Tai Chi and Stepping On. These programs help older adults gain strength, improve their balance and build confidence to help them live healthier lives.

To learn more about preventative measures or Falls Prevention Awareness Day visit:  
<http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/prevention/older-adult-falls-prevention/awareness-and-education/index.html>.

The Department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts. During 2014, the Department is recognizing 125 years of public health in Florida with educational opportunities and events. Please visit [www.FLHealth125.gov](http://www.FLHealth125.gov) for more information.

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