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## FALLS PREVENTION FOCUS OF SEPTEMBER AWARENESS EVENTS



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**Tallahassee, Fla.** —This fall season brings more than just cooler weather and football, it is also the time to prevent falls in older adults. This month, the Florida Department of Health and the Florida Department of Elder Affairs join together to highlight Falls Prevention Awareness Day on Sept. 23, 2015- the first day of fall.

“Through active prevention, our seniors can reduce their risk of injury from falls,” said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. “Improving balance through simple exercise routines, managing medications and getting vision and hearing checked regularly are three actions to prevent falls.”

Unintentional falls are the leading cause of injury death among Florida residents ages 65 years and older and the fourth leading cause of injury death overall. This year’s Falls Prevention Awareness Day theme, “Take a Stand to Prevent Falls,” raises awareness about how to prevent fall-related injury among older adults.

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) and the [National Council on Aging](#) (NCOA), there are numerous measures that can reduce the risk of falls:

- Exercise regularly. NCOA cites several evidence-based programs that are proven to help older adults reduce their risk, including Tai Chi and the Otago program.
- Consult with a health care professional about a fall risk assessment.
- Have medications reviewed by a doctor or pharmacist.
- Get eyes and ears checked at least annually.
- Ensure the home environment is safe and hazard free.

“Falls pose one of the biggest threats to elders in Florida, and there is so much we can do to reduce the risk,” said Elder Affairs Secretary Samuel Verghese. “The key to falls prevention is to understand the problem and to acknowledge the steps that we can take to keep our seniors safe.”

The Florida Department of Elder Affairs has several falls prevention presentations taking place across the state in recognition of Falls Prevention Awareness Day. Two falls prevention presentations in the Ocala area, two falls prevention community events in St. Johns County (St. Augustine & Ponte Vedra), one falls prevention presentation in Orlando, and finally a falls prevention presentation and expo in Kendall. That’s a total of six falls prevention outreach and education events planned for the month of September. It’s going to be a busy month!

For additional information, please visit the Injury Prevention Section [website for Older Adult Falls Prevention](#).

For additional information on the Department of Elder Affairs events, visit <http://elderaffairs.state.fl.us/doea/cfal.php>

### **About the Florida Department of Health**

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