

September 22nd is Fall Prevention Awareness Day!

News Release Courtesy of American Physical Therapy Association (APTA)

ALEXANDRIA, VA, August 21, 2013 – In recognition of Falls Prevention Awareness Day on September 22, the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) is urging older adults to take a moment to complete a room-by-room checklist to identify and repair possible fall hazards in their homes. “Hazards in the home are one of the leading causes of falls in older adults, says APTA spokesperson Patrice Winter, PT, DPT, “Removing throw rugs, rerouting electrical cords, and installing handrails are simple ways in which one can make a home safer.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than one-third of adults ages 65 and older fall each year in the United States. Falls are the leading cause of deaths due to injuries and the most common cause of nonfatal injuries and hospital admissions for trauma for the aging population.”

Also, older adults who use walking aids should be assessed and fitted by a physical therapist to avoid fall-related injuries. Winter says, “The top of the walker or cane should be about the height of your wrists when your arms are at your sides, and when using a walker, your arms should be slightly bent, but you shouldn’t have to bend forward at the waist to reach it.” The rubber tips at the bottom of a cane or walker should be checked periodically and replaced if they are uneven or worn through.

APTA is a member of The Falls Free™ Coalition of the National Council on Aging’s (NCOA’s) Center for Healthy Aging, and it supports the goals of that coalition, including Falls Prevention Awareness Day. Resources for clinicians and the public are available on APTA’s Balance and Falls webpage, including a video on home hazards. Additional resources are available on the NCOA Falls Free Coalition website. APTA members are encouraged to share and send their Falls Prevention Awareness Day activities and suggestions for additional APTA resources to practice-dept@apta.org.

The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) represents more than 85,000 physical therapist assistants, and students of physical therapy nationwide. Learn more about conditions physical therapists can treat and find a physical therapist in your area at www.MoveForwardPT.com. Consumers are encouraged to follow us on Twitter (@MoveForwardPT), and Facebook.

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1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Falls among older adults: an overview.
<http://www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Falls/adultfalls.html>. Accessed September 16, 2010

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