

Resources

By Patti Atkins

The Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities of Southwest Washington's Caregiver Corner

Help your loved one stay steady

Every year, more than 1 in 4 older adults in the U.S. report falling, and about 41,000 older adults die because of a fall. That's 112 older adults every day.

You can take simple steps to keep your loved one from falling, or from falling yourself.

Speak up

Talk openly about fall risks and prevention with your loved one and their health care provider.

- Tell the provider immediately if your loved one has fallen, if they are worried about falling, or if they seem unsteady.
- Keep an updated list of all of your loved one's prescription and over-the-counter medications and supplements and share them with the provider or pharmacist. Discuss any side effects, such as dizziness or sleepiness.
- Discuss alcohol and other substance use with the provider.
- Ask the provider about the potential value of vitamin D or calcium supplements to improve bone, muscle and nerve health.

Keep moving

Physical activities that improve balance and strengthen legs (like tai chi) can help prevent falls.

- Exercise and movement can help your loved one feel better and more confident.
- Ask the health care provider for an exercise program recommendation.

Have eyes and feet checked

This might seem obvious, but being able to see and walk comfortably can help prevent falls.

- Have your loved one's eyes checked by an eye doctor at least once a year.
- Replace eyeglasses as needed.
- Have the health care provider check their feet once a year.
- Discuss proper footwear and ask whether they advise seeing a foot specialist.

Make the home safe

Most falls happen at home. To improve your loved one's safety at home:

- Keep the floors clutter-free.
- Remove small throw rugs or use double-sided tape to keep rugs from slipping.
- Add grab bars next to and inside the tub or shower and next to the toilet.

- Have handrails and lights installed on all staircases.
- Make sure the home has plenty of light.

Learn more

The Centers for Disease Control has a program to help prevent falls, Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths and Injuries (STEADI) for both caregiver and health care professionals. Learn more about STEADI at <https://www.cdc.gov/steady/index.html> For assistance and information on classes or resources for fall prevention, call the Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities of Southwest Washington's Aging and Disability Resource Center at 360-694-8144 or email ClarkADRC@dshs.wa.gov.



AAADSW also offers Enhance Fitness classes for older adults (60-plus) at several convenient locations throughout Clark County. These evidence-based fitness classes can be adapted to your mobility and are free and a fun way to improve overall balance and fitness.

To learn more, visit <https://www.helpingelders.org/education> or call the ADRC.

Patti Atkins, APR, is the Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities of Southwest Washington's communications coordinator. Material for this column comes in part from the STEADI website.

INDEPENDENT LIVING

ASSISTED LIVING

MEMORY CARE



WHERE YOUR LOVED ONES ARE TREATED LIKE FAMILY

The decision to find the right care for mom and dad comes with a mix of emotions and concerns. At Belamour Care, we understand the weight of these worries — from the fear of a fall when you're not there to assist, to ensuring medications are taken precisely on time. That's why we're dedicated to not just addressing these, but transforming them into peace of mind:



- **SAFETY FIRST:** Our proactive measures prevent falls, ensuring safety around the clock.
- **TIMELY MEDICATION:** We manage medications meticulously, removing your worry about missed doses.
- **WANDERING PREVENTION:** Secure environments and engaging activities keep your loved ones safe and involved.
- **DIGNIFIED SUPPORT:** Special care for incontinence and behaviors, handled with utmost respect.
- **SIMPLIFY YOUR LIFE:** Our comprehensive care options ease the burden of managing caregiving duties amid your busy schedule.
- **DEDICATE TEAM:** Our staff provides not just expert care 24 hours but genuine companionship, making every day better.
- **PERSONALIZED CARE:** Each resident receives care that's as unique as they are, within a community that feels like family.

70% of respondents said they patronized a business they saw advertised in the The Messenger. To advertise in The Messenger, Call Barb Maynard at call 360-750-9900.

FINDING PEACE OF MIND WITH BELAMOUR CARE

BELAMOURCARE.COM



360-525-2430