



# **KEEPING SAFE:** **AGING IN PLACE**

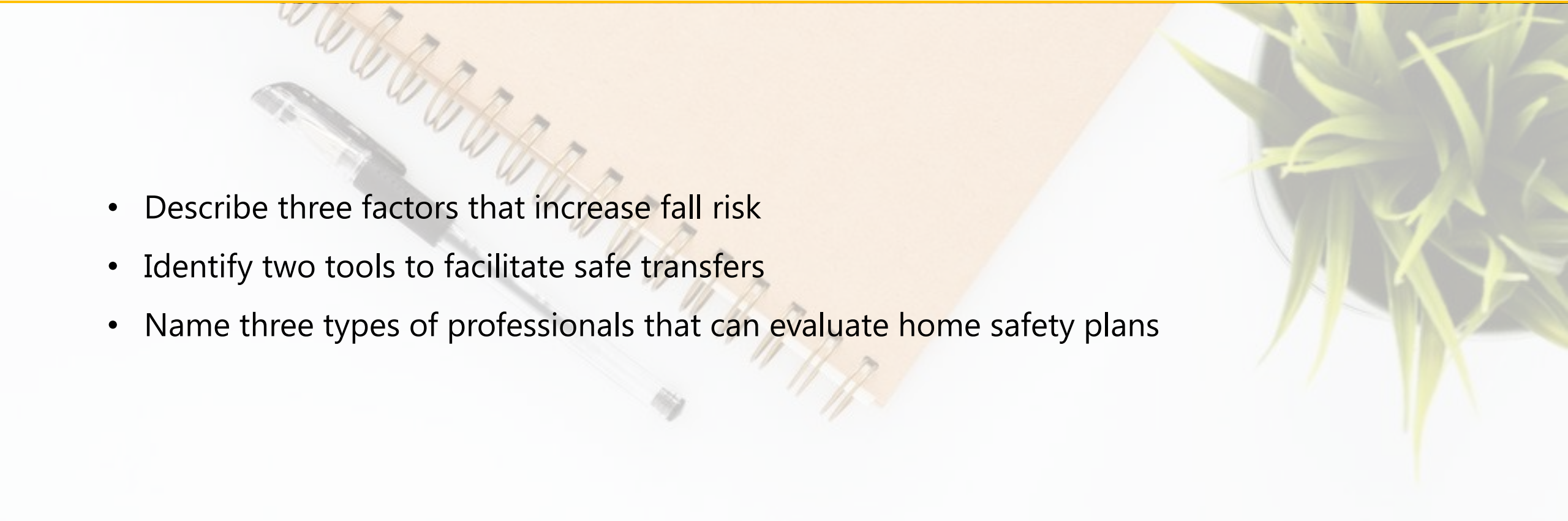
STRATEGIES FOR STAYING SAFE AT HOME

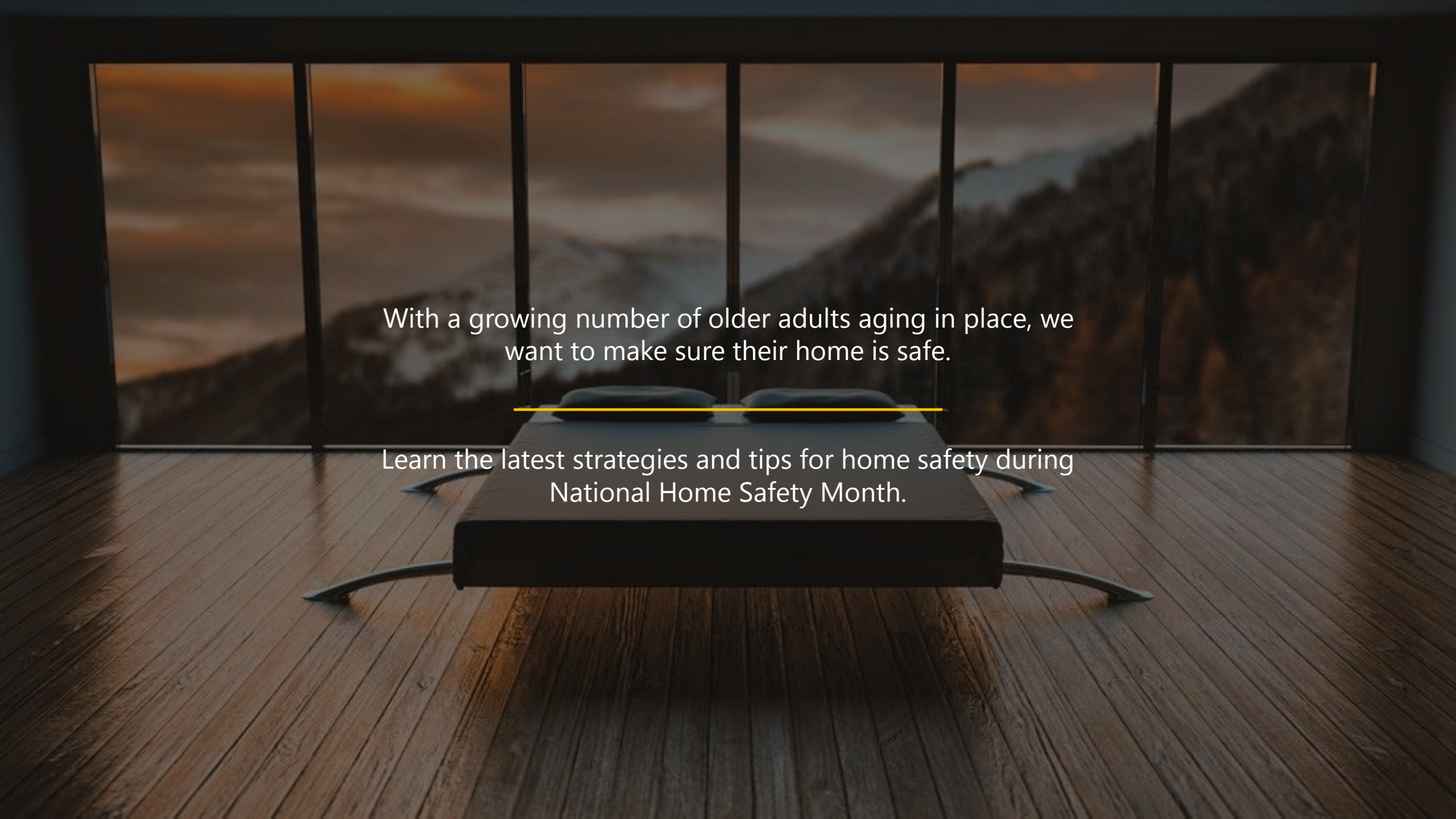
**PRESENTED BY**

Capital Nursing Education and Barbara E. West, RN, MSN, CWOCN

# OBJECTIVES

PARTICIPANTS WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Describe three factors that increase fall risk
  - Identify two tools to facilitate safe transfers
  - Name three types of professionals that can evaluate home safety plans
- 
- A decorative background image featuring a spiral notebook, a pen, and a potted plant. The notebook is open, showing lined pages and a metal spiral binding. A clear pen with a black grip lies diagonally across the notebook. To the right, a small potted plant with long, thin, green leaves is visible. The entire scene is set against a light, neutral background with a soft, yellowish tint.



With a growing number of older adults aging in place, we want to make sure their home is safe.

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Learn the latest strategies and tips for home safety during National Home Safety Month.

# OUR TEAM

- Patients/loved ones/care-receivers
- Caregivers
- Family
- Friends
- Hired caregivers
- Nurses
- Aides
- Occupational Therapists (O.T.'s)
- Physical Therapists (P.T.'s)
- Speech Therapists (S.T.'s)
- Social Workers



# DIFFERENT TYPES OF NEEDS

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- Does the person have cognitive or physical disability or both?
  - Is the condition stable/chronic or temporary/reversible?
  - Is it progressing?
  - Don't overlook the disability community as a resource!
  - Trade-off between safety/health and privacy/independence
-



# **BIG** **PICTURE QUESTIONS**

- Time to move?
- Change caregiving situation or caregiver(s)?
- Health factors
- Environmental modifications
- Tools
- What can a Home Health Agency do?

# ADDRESS HEALTH FACTORS THAT MAY AFFECT BOTH CARE-RECEIVER AND CARE-GIVER

- Denial
- Pain
- Depression (25-30% of Alzheimer's disease)
- Anxiety
- Substance abuse
- Insomnia
- Cardio-vascular status
- Fatigue
- Anemia

- Leg swelling
- Exercise
- Obesity
- Compliance with meds/devices
- Vision
- Hearing
- Underlying infection
- Medications

# TIME TO MOVE?

- Accessibility of home entry/exit
- Accessibility within home
- Supported environments, different levels:
- Meals provided
- Personal assistance
- Medication assistance
- Full 24 hour care





# CHANGING CAREGIVER SITUATION OR CAREGIVER(S)

## INTERMITTENT HELP

- Housework
- Yardwork
- Cooking
- Bathing
- Specific personal care

## INCREASING CURRENT CAREGIVING

- Family
- Friends
- Hiring

## DIFFERENT CAREGIVER

- Family vs. non-family
- Personality fit
- Experienced caregiver
- Physical strength

# FALL RISK ASSESSMENT

- History of falls
- Confusion
- Age
- Impaired judgment
- Sensory deficit
- Medications
- Unable to ambulate independently
- Decreased level of cooperation
- Increased anxiety/emotional lability
- Incontinence/urgency
- Cardiovascular/respiratory disease, perfusion and oxygenation
- Attached equipment (IV pole, tubes, etc.)



# FALL PREVENTION: PHYSICAL ASPECTS



## **REGULAR EXERCISE**

It is important that the exercises focus on increasing leg strength and improving balance, and that they get more challenging over time.



## **MEDICATION REVIEW BY A DOCTOR OR PHARMACIST**

Identify prescription and over-the-counter medicines that may cause side effects or interactions such as dizziness or drowsiness.



## **EYE EXAMINATION**

By an eye doctor at least once a year and update their eyeglasses to maximize their vision. Consider glasses with single vision distance lenses for some activities such as walking outside.



## REGULAR EXERCISE

- Regular – Not necessarily hours at the gym!
- Make it Fun and Interesting
- Include each type of exercise
  - Endurance
  - Strength
  - Balance
  - Flexibility



# STRENGTH

- Even small increases in muscle strength can make a big difference in your ability to stay independent and carry out everyday activities such as climbing stairs and carrying groceries.
- Some people call using weight to improve your muscle strength “strength training” or “resistance training.”
- Strength exercises include:
  - Lifting weights
  - Using a resistance band



## STRENGTH

- **Strength** training can maintain your ability to:
  - Carry a full laundry basket from the basement to the second floor
  - Carry your smaller grandchildren
  - Lift bags of mulch in the garden



## **BALANCE**

- Balance exercises help prevent falls, a common problem in older adults.
- Many lower-body strength exercises also will improve your balance.
- Exercises to improve your balance include:
  - Standing on one foot
  - Heel-to-toe walk
  - Tai Chi



# BALANCE

- **Balance** exercises can help you:
  - Stand on tiptoe to reach something on the top shelf
  - Walk up and down the stairs
  - Walk on an uneven sidewalk without falling



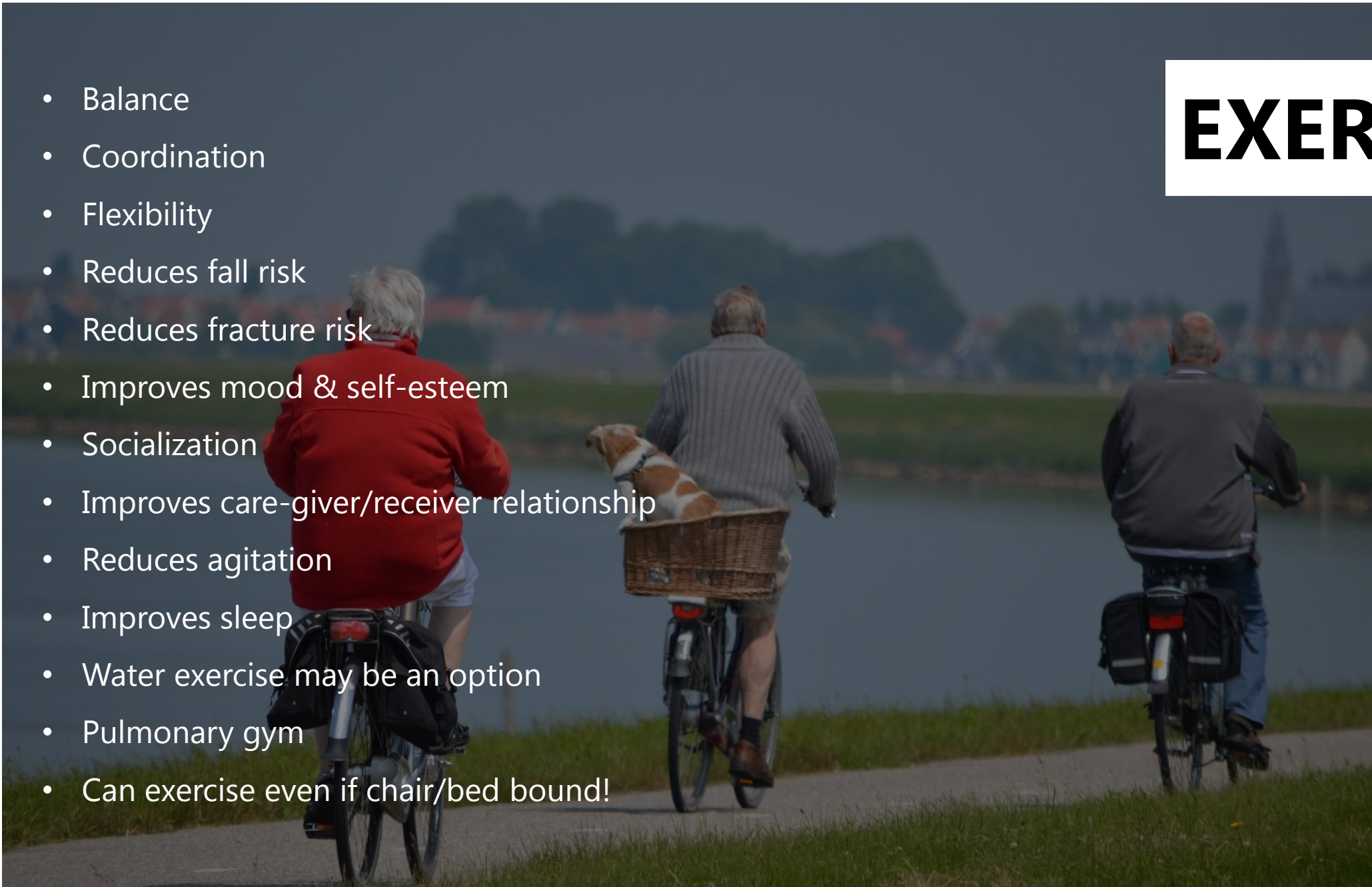


## FLEXIBILITY

- **Flexibility**, or stretching, exercises make it possible for you to:
  - Look over your shoulder to see what's behind you as you back the car out of the driveway
  - Make the bed
  - Bend over to tie your shoes

# EXERCISE

- Balance
- Coordination
- Flexibility
- Reduces fall risk
- Reduces fracture risk
- Improves mood & self-esteem
- Socialization
- Improves care-giver/receiver relationship
- Reduces agitation
- Improves sleep
- Water exercise may be an option
- Pulmonary gym
- Can exercise even if chair/bed bound!



# ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFICATIONS

- Put yourself in their place
- “Simplify, simplify, simplify”
- Simplify pathways, use furniture to define pathways
- Reduce clutter
- Simplicity makes finding hidden/lost items easier
- Don’t change too many things at once
- Label drawers with photos
- Improve lighting
- More lighting
- Accessible switches
- Motion activated
- Night-lights
- Eliminate stair-climbing
- Temperature regulation

# FALL PREVENTION: IDENTIFYING DANGERS IN THE HOME



## STAIRWAY CHECKLIST

### **Are there objects stacked on the stairs?**

Keep stairs clear by removing all shoes, books or other objects from the stairs.

### **Is there any loose or torn carpet on steps?**

Reattach loose carpet, or remove carpeting and attach non-slip safety treads or safety tape instead.

### **Are there handrails on both sides of the stairs?**

Make sure full-length handrails are firmly attached on both sides of the stairs. Tighten or replace loose handrails.

# FALL PREVENTION: IDENTIFYING DANGERS IN THE HOME



## STAIRWAY CHECKLIST

**Is there a light over the stairway, with light switches at both top and bottom of the stairs?**

Or use night lights in surrounding outlets.

**Are the stairs easy to see in low light?**

Paint a contrasting color strip on the top edge of steps to make them easier to see.

# **FALL PREVENTION:** **IDENTIFYING DANGERS IN THE HOME**



## **FLOORING CHECKLIST**

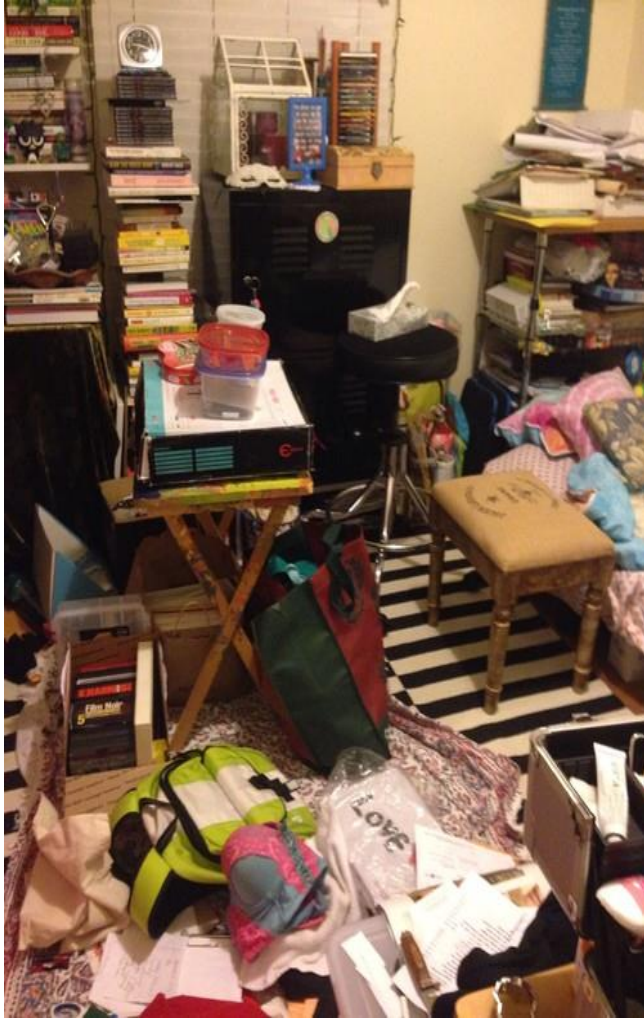
**Is there a straight path through each room?**

Rearrange furniture to create a straight path.

**Are there throw rugs or area rugs on the floor?**

Eliminate or use double-sided tape or non-slip pads.

# FALL PREVENTION: IDENTIFYING DANGERS IN THE HOME



## FLOORING CHECKLIST

### **Are there loose wires or cords?**

Prevent tripping by coiling or taping cords and wires next to the wall.

### **Are there objects stacked on the floor?**

Move objects off the floor.

# FALL PREVENTION: IDENTIFYING DANGERS IN THE HOME



## BATHROOM CHECKLIST

**Are there non-skid shower mats or safety treads in the shower or tub?**

Add a non-slip mat or non-skid strips to shower/tub floor.

**Are there secure grab bars to help maneuver in and out of the tub, or up from the toilet?**

Have a professional install grab bars.



# FALL PREVENTION: IDENTIFYING DANGERS IN THE HOME



## BEDROOM CHECKLIST

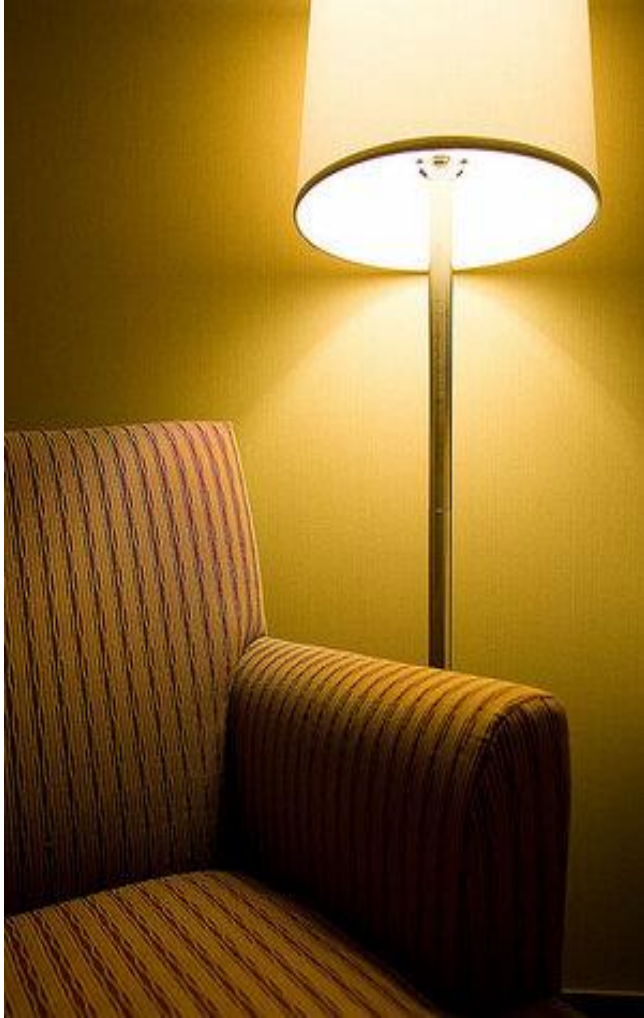
**Is there a light right next to the bed?**

Move a lamp close by, so there is light within easy reach.

**Is there a lit pathway between the bed and the bathroom at night?**

Add night lights or glow-in the dark tape to light the way.

# FALL PREVENTION: IDENTIFYING DANGERS IN THE HOME



## OTHER HOUSEHOLD TIPS

### **Is the house brightly lit?**

Replace low-watt light bulbs with fluorescent or bright white bulbs.

### **Are shoes worn inside and outside the home?**

Wear shoes at home whenever possible. Going barefoot or wearing socks or slippers increases fall and injury risk.

## FALL RISK AND INCONTINENCE:

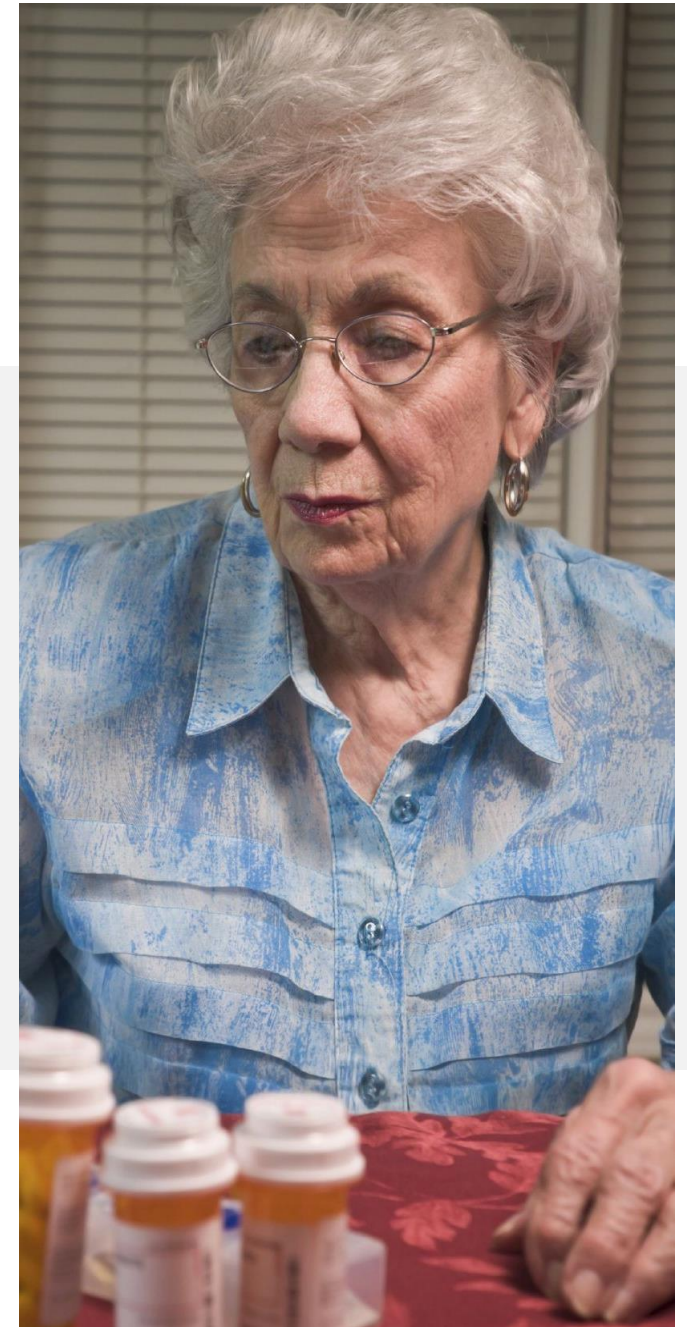
# URINARY INCONTINENCE CAN CONTRIBUTE TO FALL RISK IN SEVERAL WAYS:

- Incontinence episodes may lead to slips on wet floor surfaces.
- Urge incontinence may increase risk when a patient hurries to the toilet to avoid wetting themselves.
- Episodes of urinary incontinence may be transitory and often related to acute illness, such as urinary tract infections that can cause incontinence, delirium, drowsiness and hypotension.
- Medications used to treat incontinence, can cause postural hypotension.
- Nocturia can result in poor sleep, which is associated with increased fall risk.

## FALL RISK AND INCONTINENCE:

# STRATEGIES TO PREVENT FALL RISK

- Identify and treat the cause of incontinence, including medication side effects.
- Respond to toileting requests promptly.
- Locate patient closer to the toilet, if possible. Consider a bedside commode or urinal if the toilet is not close by.
- Implement a toilet assistance program that best matches the patient's needs and void pattern.



## FALL RISK AND INCONTINENCE:

# STRATEGIES TO PREVENT FALL RISK

- Ensure that patient is wearing suitable clothes that can be easily removed or undone and that patient wears footwear to reduce slipping in urine.
- Consider a non-slip mat on the floor beside the bed for patients who experience urinary incontinence when transferring from bed.
- Keep the pathway to the toilet obstacle free and leave a night light on in the bedroom/bathroom at night.
- Assess the need for absorbent products.

# TOILETING: AIMING ISSUES

1

Provide grab bar  
to self-stabilize

2

Provide contrasting  
color toilet seat

3

Colored electrical  
tape to outline toilet  
bowl rim

4

"Target" inside  
toilet bowl

5

Rubber floor mat

# ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS: KITCHEN

- Non-breakable dishes/cups
- Remove cabinet doors
- Lazy Susan in cupboard
- Tiered/step shelves
- Pull-out shelves
- Jar-openers
- Hooks to hang items in view



# ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS: KITCHEN

- Appliances on table instead of counter
  - Toaster
  - Coffee-maker
  - Can-opener
- Pet food on low table instead of floor
- Dispose or lock toxic products
- Choose appliances with automatic shut-off
- Garbage disposal that operates only with cover
- Timers to set limits on stove/appliances
- Scald guard
- Flood alarm





# ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS: BATHROOM STRUCTURAL

- Wheelchair accessibility
- Disable door lock
- Grab bars
- Walk-in/roll-in shower
- Fold-down shower seat
- Replace shower door with curtain
- Hand-held shower
- Levers instead of knobs
- Bidet attachment
- Cushion corners/edges with foam pipe insulation





## ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS: BATHROOM TOOLS

- Non-skid mat or decals
- Shower chair
- Transfer bench
- Raised toilet seat
- Soap or toothpaste dispenser



# ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS: LIVING ROOM & BEDROOM

- Raising couch/chairs/bed with 2x4's
- Lift chair
- Transfer pole
- Eliminate rugs
- Hospital bed
- Large clock or "talking clock"
- Bedside commode
- Hoyer lift
- Trapeze
- Overbed table (not just for bed, also for w/c, etc.)



# ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS: ENTRYWAYS

- Ramps
- Lifts (when not enough space for ramp)
- Railings
- Doorknobs – replace with lever-style
- Remove thresholds
- Non-slip strips for stairs, contrasting colors for treads/risers
- Eliminate open-tread stairs

# WHAT CAN A HOME HEALTH AGENCY DO?

- Occupational Therapist
- Physical Therapist
- Nurses: address related health issues
- Aides
- Social Worker -- Advise on making a change?
  - more accessible space
  - higher level of care
  - better match between patient & CG

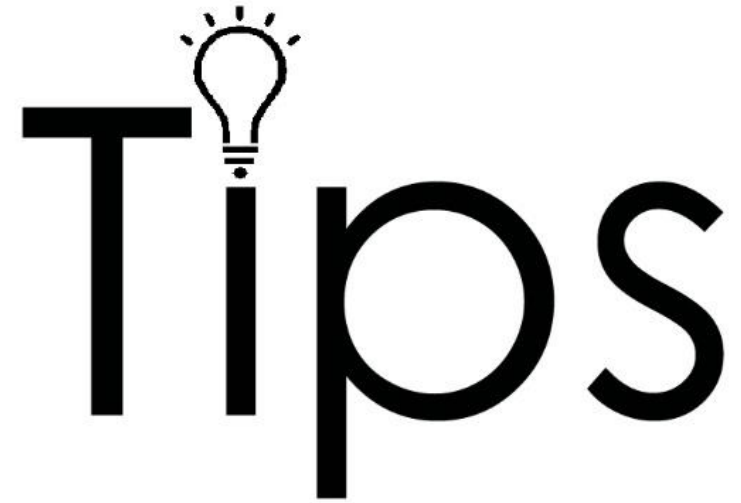


## WHAT TASKS CAN YOU OFF-LOAD?

- Weekly visit to hairdressers for shampoo
- Nail salon
- Podiatrist for toenail care
- Housecleaning
- Yard work
- Grocery home delivery
- Medication delivery (in pre-filled medisets!)

# GROOMING TIPS

- Maintaining identity vs. simplifying
- Simpler/shorter hairdo
- Less make-up
- Shift to electric razor



Tip

The word "Tip" is written in a large, bold, black serif font. A simple line-art icon of a lit lightbulb is positioned above the letter 'i', with three short lines radiating from the top of the bulb to indicate light. The entire graphic is set against a white background within a light gray rectangular frame.



# DRESSING

- Simplify wardrobe
  - Buy a size larger
  - Easily washable
  - Velcro/elastic
  - Zippers or snaps instead of buttons
  - Slippers/shoes with non-skid soles
- 
- Sock aids / Donning devices
  - Search “adaptive clothing”



# TRANSFERRING

1

Hospital bed

2

Bed rails

3

Pull-rope

4

Trapeze

5

Floor-to-  
ceiling pole /  
transfer pole

6

Transfer belt

7

Slide board /  
transfer board

8

Chair with arms

9

Space to bring  
heels under  
chair

10

Lift chair

# TIPS FOR SAFE TRANSFERRING

1

Tell her what you're going to do before you do it

2

Get as close as possible

3

Wide stance, one foot slightly in front

4

Count to three

5

Balance your own weight, back straight, knees bent

6

Use legs, not back

7

Don't twist, pivot

8

Hoyer Lift

9

Ceiling lift

# AMBULATING

- P.T. eval
- Podiatry eval (calluses, hammer toes, bunions, etc.)
- Well-fitting, well-cushioned, low-heeled shoes
- Pedicure
- Control foot/leg swelling
- Walker (standard, 2-wheeled, 4-wheeled)
- Cane (single-point, quad cane)
- Stair lift
- Walking down stairs backwards
- Environment may be key to success
- Ambulating with assist

# MISCELLANEOUS TOOLS – THE SKY'S THE LIMIT!

- **Technology is not a replacement for human interaction**
  - Emergency call buttons, Tele-Vists, etc.

## DEMENTIA-ASSOCIATED BEHAVIOR:

# WANDERING

- Make time for regular exercise
- Consider installing new locks that require a key
- Try a barrier like a curtain or colored streamer to mask the door
- Place a black mat or paint a black space on your front porch
- Add “child-safe” plastic covers to doorknobs
- Consider installing a home security system or monitoring system
- Put away essential items
- Have your relative wear an ID bracelet
- Tell neighbors about your relative’s wandering behavior





# TIPS FOR **SUCCESS**

- Choose your battles
- Hugs
- Let the person you are caring for make as many decisions as possible
- Address spiritual concerns
- Work with healthcare professionals
- Work with others who also care about your loved one
- Take care of your own needs and feelings
  - Recognize when you are overwhelmed



# COMMUNITY AND EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES



**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**  
[cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)



**National Council on Aging**  
[ncoa.org](https://www.ncoa.org)



**Caregiver Action Network**  
[caregiveraction.org](https://www.caregiveraction.org)



**Shield HealthCare Community**  
[shieldhealthcare.com/community](https://www.shieldhealthcare.com/community)



# FALL PREVENTION

## REFERENCES:

### **Aha-solutions.org**

<http://www.aha-solutions.org/resources/pdf-files/rlsolutions-2014-0603-wp-cmsnever.pdf>

### **CDC.Gov**

<http://www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Falls/adultfalls.html>

### **CMS.gov**

<http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-Fee-for-Service-Payment/AcuteInpatientPPS/HAC-Reduction-Program.html>

### **Sage Journals**

<http://hhc.sagepub.com/content/23/2/125.abstract>



# INTERNET RESOURCES

Driving -- <https://www.caring.com/articles/when-to-stop-driving>

Wheelchair to car transfer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MAoEmnBHPdo>  
Learn how to correctly transfer and individual from wheelchair to car, car to wheelchair.

**Safe transfer techniques:** [http://www.ideasforot.com/?page\\_id=184](http://www.ideasforot.com/?page_id=184)  
Occupational Therapy: Tips for Safe Transfers, includes car transfers

## Continance-specific resources:

**National Association for Continance:** <https://www.nafc.org/>

**Find a pelvic health practitioner:**  
<https://pelvicguru.com/2016/02/13/find-a-pelvic-health-professional/>

**Herman & Wallace practitioner directory:**  
<https://hermanwallace.com/practitioner-directory>. Herman & Wallace is a leading educator for pelvic health practitioners. They maintain a list of providers who have taken their classes.

**Inctontinence Support Resource Center:**  
<http://www.incontinencesupport.info/>

## RESOURCES

# Family Caregiver Alliance (FCA)

seeks to improve the quality of life for caregivers through education, services, research, and advocacy. Through its National Center on Caregiving, FCA offers information on current social, public policy, and caregiving issues and provides assistance in the development of public and private programs for caregivers.

**caregiver.org**



[About FCA](#) [Caregiver Education](#) [Policy & Advocacy](#) [Caregiver Connect](#) [Press](#) [Contact Us](#)



Family Caregiver Alliance supports and sustains the important work of families nationwide caring for loved ones with chronic, disabling health conditions.

### Get Involved

- ▶ [Subscribe to FCA's E-newsletters](#)
- ▶ [Join an Online Caregiver Group](#)
- ▶ [Share Your Caregiver Story](#)
- ▶ [WE CALL IT caregiving. \(www.caregiver.org/paratransit\)](#)

Searching for Caregiving Information?

### Find Your Caregiving Situation

[Preparing for Caregiving](#)

[New to Caregiving](#)

[Daily or In-Home Caregiving](#)

[Long Distance Caregiving](#)

[Caregiving & Advanced Illness](#)

[Post-Caregiving](#)

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A majority of us will be caregivers at some point in our lives. As loved ones age, debilitating disease, chronic health conditions or simple frailty can soon follow. Or we may end up caring for someone permanently injured from an

### FAMILY CARE NAVIGATOR — Click on Your State



# ORGANIZATIONS

## Eldercare Locator

This service of the Administration on Aging offers information about and referrals to respite care and other home and community services offered by state and Area Agencies on Aging.

<http://www.eldercare.gov/>

## Alzheimer's Association Safe Return Program

A nationwide program that identifies people with dementia who wander away and returns them to their homes. For a registration fee, families can register their loved one in a national confidential computer database. They also receive an identification bracelet or necklace and other identification and educational materials.

<http://www.alz.org/safetycenter>



# INTERNET RESOURCES

Paying for Senior Care: <https://www.payingforseniorcare.com>  
641-715-3900 Ext. 606151#, Provides tools, information and creative ideas which help families and caregivers discover the means to care for their elderly loved ones.

Resources for Rehabilitation: <http://www.rfr.org>. A source for publications that enable people with disabilities and chronic conditions to remain independent.

This Caring Home: [thiscaringhome.org](http://thiscaringhome.org). Provides detailed, room-by-room safety tips and reviews of products. National Rehabilitation Information Center: <http://www.naric.com/> 800/346-2742 (V) 301/459-5984 (TTY) The Alzheimer's Store: [alzstore.com](http://alzstore.com) or 800-752-3238. Sells products for people with dementia. Even if you don't buy, can give you ideas for things you can do yourself.

Nancy Andrews, photographer, website: <http://www.nancyandrews.com/>

Also look for disease-specific resources and support groups! Contact your local Area Agency on Aging!

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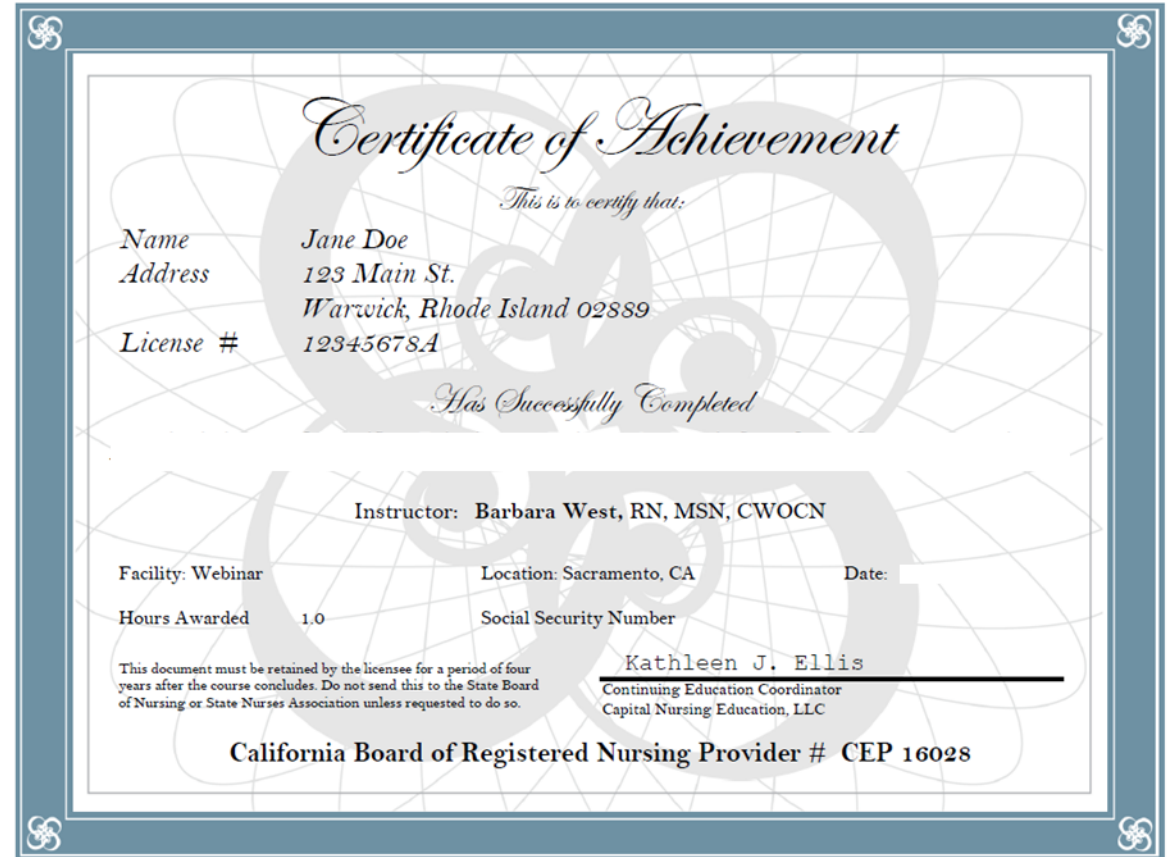
# CE CONTACT HOUR

## Healthcare Professionals CE Contact Hour Provided by:

Capital Nursing Education  
California BRN provider # 16028  
[Capitalnursingeducation@gmail.com](mailto:Capitalnursingeducation@gmail.com)

CE contact hour will be issued via email directly from  
Capital Nursing Education within 5-7 business days.

**Please be sure to check your spam folder.**



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## CAREGIVERS COMMUNITY

Caregivers Home



### Caregiver Contest Finalist Lori: Give Them Choices

The theme for our caregiver contest this year was "What Advice Would Give a Fellow Caregiver?" One of our finalists, Lori C., gives her answer: "Give the person you are working with choices, 'Would you like jam or butter on your toast?' rather than telling them to eat their toast."

Aimee Sharp



### Caregiver Contest Finalist Charmane: Create Your Own Resource Guide

Charmane H. is from Illinois, and was one of forty finalists chosen out of the over 1,000 entries to...

Aimee Sharp



### Aging in Place: Strategies for Staying Safe at Home Webinar

With a growing number of older adults aging in place, it's increasingly important to make sure that the home is safe. Learn the latest strategies and tips for home safety this National Home Safety Month.

Danny Nguyen



### Caregiver Contest Finalist Gloria: Soothing Medically-Fragile Children

Gloria G. is from California, and was one of forty finalists chosen out of the over 1,000 entries to...

Aimee Sharp



### Caregivers Community Links

Home

Caregivers 101

Links

### Follow Shield HealthCare



SHIELD NEWSLETTER

You can find more useful information in our online caregivers community at: [shieldhealthcare.com/caregivers](https://shieldhealthcare.com/caregivers)

View past and upcoming webinars at: [shieldhealthcare.com/webinars](https://shieldhealthcare.com/webinars)



**QUESTIONS?**



**THIS SEMINAR IS AVAILABLE FOR  
PRESENTATION IN YOUR AGENCY.**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

Shield Healthcare

[www.shieldhealthcare.com](http://www.shieldhealthcare.com)

800.765.8775

Capital Nursing Education

[www.capitalnursingeducation.com](http://www.capitalnursingeducation.com)

916.276.8965