

September 20, 2019

# ON FIRST DAY OF FALL

## NASSAU COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

### PROMOTES FALL PREVENTION



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**Nassau County** – On September 23<sup>rd</sup>, Nassau County Health Department recognizes National Falls Prevention Awareness Day (FPAD). In 2008, the US Senate passed a resolution for the first annual National Falls Prevention Awareness Day. Since then, the resolution has obtained bipartisan sponsorship every year. By recognizing FPAD, it is an opportunity to promote public awareness that falls prevention is essential for healthy aging. According to Eugenia Ngo-Seidel, MD, MPH, Director, Nassau County Health Department: “As persons age, avoiding falls and the resulting potential injuries, is a key public health prevention strategy.”

Falls are a major risk to healthy aging, having an active lifestyle, and mobility. As persons age, bone density and muscle strength decreases, and balance changes, increasing the risk for falls and related injuries. In older persons, falls are more likely to result in permanent injury, impaired mobility or, depending on the severity of the fall, even death. Key activities to preventing falls and injury are a healthy diet, and regular exercise to maintain muscle strength, tone and balance.

Mobility, avoiding falls and maintaining the ability to move, is one of the four cornerstones of a holistic care strategy for healthy aging. Nassau County Health Department supports the **Four M's**, a national framework for age-friendly health systems. Lead by the John A. Hartford Foundation, the Four M's framework includes the essential elements to promote age-friendly health systems:

- **Mobility**, the ability to move comfortably and safely
- **Mentation**, slowing cognitive decline and dementia
- **Medication**, safe medication administration, and
- **Matters**, or centering care around the aging person to what matters to them

Nassau community partners are working collaboratively to educate older adults on Fall Prevention include Nassau County Council on Aging, Baptist Medical Center- Nassau, Fernandina Beach Fire Department, Northeast Florida Area Health Education Center (AHEC) and ElderSource.

Nassau County Health Department supports healthy aging through advocacy and partnering with community public health partners with the Nassau County Age-Friendly Advisory Council. The actions of the Council are to perform age-friendly policy and practice scan, data dissemination, and to educate and promote awareness of age-friendly practices and promote integrating age-friendly practices in community health systems.

The National Council on Aging has a [list of national evidenced-based fall preventions programs](#).

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

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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