



Falls Prevention Program at Youville House

By Joan Landers, RN, Wellness Director, and Katie Blanchard, Programs Director

Many older people find themselves at risk for falling. In fact, approximately one in three people over age sixty-five fall every year. The risk of falling and injuries incurred from falls are concerns that prompt many people to consider a move to Youville House.

Falls Risk Assessment

Each new Resident is given a Falls Risk Assessment, which identifies their individual risk factors for falling. Based on this assessment, the Wellness nurse may recommend additional training in the proper use of a



*Joan Landers RN,
Wellness Director*

cane or walker, or a referral for physical therapy to improve strength and balance. During the Falls Risk Assessment, the nurse obtains a history of falls, and even considers if the Resident's footwear could be contributing to their risk for falling. Other important risk factors include medi-

cations, alcohol use, and medical conditions such as high blood pressure, Parkinson's Disease, visual impairment, and depression or cognitive impairment.

Ultimately, the Falls Risk Assessment helps the Wellness nurse to identify a Resident's risk for falling,

as well as in the development of a plan of personal care, exercise and diet that may help to avoid a fall.

Environmental Factors

Many falls happen in the home. At Youville House, we evaluate a Resident's furniture arrangements to identify trip hazards, such as extension cords, poorly arranged furniture, clutter, loose rugs and poor lighting. This allows us to assist Residents in modifying their surroundings in order to be safer. In addition, bathrooms are equipped with grab bars and Residents often use shower seats. We provide assistance with showering and dressing, and upon request, assist with late night trips to the bathroom when Residents may be at greater risk for a fall.

Youville House is a subsidiary of Youville Lifecare and member of Covenant Health Systems. For more information please visit www.youvillehouse.com or call 617-491-1234



The goal of the Youville House Falls Prevention Program is to reduce the number of Resident falls. Our success is evident, as regular participants in the daily exercise programs have fewer falls than Residents who do not participate. Our goal is to convince more Residents that the key to staying healthy is staying active in a fun, effective exercise program.

Strength and Balance

Most older people do not exercise regularly, but an effective exercise regime can improve balance and increase endurance. Building muscles that contribute to postural alignment and strength in the ankles, knees, hips and trunk can help prevent falls. Youville House



offers many opportunities for Residents to increase their strength and improve balance.

Residents are encouraged to participate in a variety of exercise programs from Yoga to line dancing. They can also take advantage of

Stretch & Flex and Balance Challenge classes offered each week day.

Youville House is now implementing the Matter of Balance Program. Our trained staff will plan and implement exercise programs specifically tailored to the needs of the elderly at risk for falls. Often, Residents who fall or fear falling isolate themselves in their apartment in an effort to avoid falling. This program reaches out to those Residents, raising their awareness of the benefits of exercise, and involving them in

discussions about lifestyle issues and concerns around the risk of falling.

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“I’m already noticing a difference in my physical being. I’m sure I’m a little more mobile than I had been, and I plan to continue these exercises. Hopefully, I’ll be jumping over the moon soon!”

Testimonial from a participant in the program

For more about our Falls Prevention Program, Joan and Katie can be contacted at: joanlanders@youvillehouse.org and programs@youvillehouse.org

