



News Release

Sunrise Fire-Rescue Department
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For Release: IMMEDIATE

STAND TOGETHER TO PREVENT FALLS!

(SUNRISE, FL)- As far as awareness campaigns go, September is just brimming with a wide array of [causes](#), including designations like [National Head Lice Prevention Month](#) and [World Rabies Day](#). Yikes! One of this month's campaigns, [Falls Prevention Awareness Day](#), observed in the U.S on September 22nd, seeks to curb something we should find truly scary: injury obtained when someone takes a fall.

Falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries for adults age 65 and older, one-in-three of whom will fall each year. With more than [15%](#) of all Sunrise residents being in this same age demographic, the risk is of particular relevance here. Over the last five years, Sunrise Fire Rescue (SFR) responded to over 5878 injuries resulting from a person falling.

The good news is that these occurrences can be reduced in both frequency and severity through evidence-based programs, such as SFR's Community Paramedic program and *A Matter of Balance* classes, the latter of which is offered free of charge through the City of Sunrise Senior Center in partnership with the [Aging and Disability Resource Center \(ADRC\)](#). Upon implementing these prevention efforts and conducting ongoing educational outreach, 9-1-1 call data from 2012 – 2016 reveals that SFR has seen a steady reduction in the number fall-related injuries each year.

Now celebrating a decade of ongoing Falls Prevention Awareness Day campaigns, the National Council on Aging (NCOA) has announced this year's campaign theme: "10 Years Standing Together to Prevent Falls". The NCOA recommends older adults take the following actions to reduce personal risk factors that may make them more vulnerable for fall-related injuries:

- **Stay Active.** Lack of exercise results in diminished muscle tone and bone density, whereas physical activity can maintain - and even *increase* - strength and balance. Activities like Tai Chi and Chair Yoga have been proven to buffer against possible injuries resulting from a fall, and to reduce a person's likelihood of falling in the first place. These classes – like *A Matter of Balance* - are offered at the Senior Center; call (954) 572-3670 for details.
- **Visit your doctor**, regularly reviewing medications for side effects and interactions. Have your vision and hearing checked, updating prescription glasses and hearing aids if needed.
- **Use assisted devices**, such as a walker or wheelchair, as advised and use them consistently. These devices can be wonderful aides in maintaining independence and quality of life, when used faithfully as directed.
- **Do a home safety check** to identify and correct common hazards like loose rugs, cluttered walkways, and insufficient lighting. Installing grab bars in the shower is strongly recommended. Home safety modifications may be available locally at no cost to eligible seniors, through programs such as Home Touch and the Barrier Free Housing Program; call the [ADRC](#) at (954)745-9779 for more information on those resources and numerous others.

For more information, please visit www.sunrisefl.gov/Fire, and follow @SunriseFRD on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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