

We Can Help You Stay Upright.

We believe that the musculoskeletal system is best assessed by a practitioner who works with it on a regular basis and is an expert in the recognition of faulty movement patterns. In the realm of falls prevention, this would include an assessment of:

- *Nervous, muscular, fascial, and skeletal systems*
- *Structural changes (pronated/supinated feet, bunions, posture, winging scapula, abnormal spinal curves)*
- *Movement—too much, too little, uncoordinated*
- *Areas of weakness and fatigue*
- *Balance deficits*
- *Gait pattern*



Put Our Expertise on Your Side.

Our quest for better results keeps us constantly training, studying, and revising our approach to physical therapy. We utilize non-traditional, research based interventions that yield superior results for many people. These innovative techniques can have a positive impact on reducing falls and include:

- ◇ *Fascial Manipulation® to maximize mobility, strength, and sensory input*
- ◇ *Postural Restoration® Interventions*
- ◇ *Fit Light Training*
- ◇ *Individualized Exercise*
- ◇ *Group Exercise Opportunities*



SCHEDULE AN EVALUATION

Call one of our offices today to schedule an appointment with one of our skilled therapists.

Se Habla Español

© Colleen Whiteford, 2018



Appalachian Physical Therapy
"There's a difference you can feel"

Balance and Falls Prevention



Going Beyond Getting Rid of Throw Rugs

Broadway

171 E. Springbrook Rd.
Broadway, VA 22815
540-901-9501

Harrisonburg

2035 E. Market St., Suite 45
Harrisonburg, VA 22801
540-209-8977

www.apafc.com

Did You Know That....



- ◆ One-fourth of Americans aged 65+ falls each year.
- ◆ Every 11 seconds, an older adult is treated in the emergency room for a fall; every 19 minutes, an older adult dies from a fall.
- ◆ Falls are the leading cause of fatal injury and the most common cause of nonfatal trauma-related hospital admissions among older adults.
- ◆ Falls result in more than 2.8 million injuries treated in emergency departments annually, including over 800,000 hospitalizations and more than 27,000 deaths.
- ◆ In 2013, the total cost of fall injuries was \$34 billion.
- ◆ The financial toll for older adult falls is expected to increase as the population ages and may reach \$67.7 billion by 2020.

Why Do Falls Occur?

There can be a variety and combination of reasons as to why any individual falls, and sometimes accidents just happen. But in the aging population, falls often occur due to any or all of these culprits:

Balance Deficits arise from many sources such as:

Nervous system—neurological impairment and altered sensation anywhere in the feet as well as the entire lower extremity. Nerves are all over—into muscles, fascia, tendons, and joints so these each play into balance.

Vestibular System—dysfunction of the inner ear and nervous system can skew the body's awareness of where it is in space.

Vision—often declines with age.

Declining Mobility of the trunk and extremities is a *huge* factor. Flexibility loss in soft tissues and joints can greatly reduce an individual's functional mobility.

Strength Loss—muscle fibers atrophy more readily later in life than earlier.

Pain - people tend to avoid what hurts. When movement becomes painful people understandably avoid it, contributing to all of the above problems.

Medication— *Every* medication has a side effect. For some this means compromising balance and increasing fall risk in a variety of manners: dizziness, lowered blood pressure, inducing drowsiness, and increasing trips to the bathroom are just some examples.

Environmental Hazards— throw rugs get lots of attention. But fallen objects, cluttered areas, uneven terrain, even pets can heighten fall risk.

Sedentary Lifestyle—For a variety of reasons many older adults may find themselves increasingly sedentary. This plays into mobility, strength, pain, and meds.

This Is a BIG Problem.

Falls, with or without injury, also carry a heavy quality of life impact. A growing number of older adults fear falling and, as a result, limit their activities and social engagements. This can lead to further physical decline, depression, social isolation, and feelings of helplessness. Everyday tasks once taken for granted, such as being able to ambulate to the bathroom or bend over to retrieve an object, become high-risk and therefore avoided. Beyond the fear of falling, the stark reality and aftermath of a fall can be the deciding factor for an adult to remain in their home.



Can Anything Be Done?

Certainly picking up throw rugs, wearing good shoes, and lighting dark areas are common sense, good measures that everyone should utilize. Wearing a cell phone or life alert type of device for use in the event of an episode may be practical for some. But these actions are only so helpful—some only after a fall.

Put Your Best Foot Forward .

Falls *ARE NOT* an inevitable result of aging. There is *A LOT* that can be done to diminish the likelihood of a fall and the dire consequences.....