Facts on falls

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Please circle your answer:

1. Falls are the leading cause of injury in older adults. True False

2. You should always put on your reading glasses when walking, especially on stairs, to reduce your risk of falling. True False

3. A “slip” or “trip” can result in serious injury. True False

4. If you exercise and improve your muscle strength, as well as eat a healthy diet, you can reduce your risk of falling. True False

5. Most falls happen away from home. True False

6. Side effects of medications can contribute to falls in older adults. True False

7. Injuries from falls are predictable and preventable. True False

8. Women, especially those over 75, are at greater risk for injury due to falling. True False

Turn over for answers...

HEALTHY AGING
it’s your move!
Answers:

1 **TRUE**
Falls are the leading cause of injury and the sixth cause of death in seniors. Falls in older adults costs $6.2 billion a year to the Canadian health care system (The Economic Burden of Injury in Canada, SmartRisk).

2 **FALSE**
Be sure you remove your reading glasses for walking, or climbing up or down stairs. If you use bifocals, adjust your glasses so you can see the stairs clearly (Public Health Agency of Canada).

3 **TRUE**
People who “slip or trip”, and end up falling, usually do not report such an experience as a fall. Speak to your doctor or nurse about how to prevent a fall (Step Ahead to Falls Prevention).

4 **TRUE**
Regular physical activity is one of the most effective means to reduce your risk from falls and to prevent injury. Healthy eating provides energy and strength for being physically active. Diets low in calcium and Vitamin D may increase the risk for fracture in seniors with osteoporosis (Smart Moves, Smart Risk).

5 **FALSE**
Up to 75 per cent of falls happen in the home. Slipping, tripping, stumbling from one level to another are the most common causes of injury. The stairs and bathroom are particularly dangerous (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2005).

6 **TRUE**
20 per cent of falls in older adults are caused by improper use of medications (Step Ahead to Falls Prevention: Falls Risk Factors).

7 **TRUE**
Unintentional injuries are a leading cause of hospitalization and death in Canada. While these injuries are usually called “accidents,” they often occur under preventable conditions. Some of the risks associated with these accidents are hazards in the home, misuse of medications, balance and gait problems, and blood pressure problems (www.york.ca/injuryprevention).

8 **TRUE**
Women tend to have less muscle strength, be more prone to brittle bones (osteoporosis), and take more medications than men. Twice as many older women are admitted to hospital than men of the same age (Step Ahead to Falls Prevention).

For more information, please contact
York Region Health Connection
1-800-361-5653
TTY 1-866-252-9933
www.york.ca/injuryprevention