Talking with your Patient about Falls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If you hear:</th>
<th>You can say:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Precontemplation Stage</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Falling is just a matter of bad luck.</td>
<td>As we age, falls are more likely for many reasons, including changes in our balance and how we walk.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Contemplation Stage</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>My friend down the street fell and ended up in a nursing home.</td>
<td>Preventing falls can prevent broken hips &amp; help you stay independent.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Preparation Stage</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>I’m worried about falling. Do you think there’s anything I can do to keep from falling?</td>
<td>Let’s look at some factors that may make you likely to fall &amp; talk about what you could do about one or two of them.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Action Stage</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>I know a fall can be serious. What can I do to keep from falling and stay independent?</td>
<td>I’m going to fill out a referral form for a specialist who can help you improve your balance.</td>
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For more information, go to: www.cdc.gov/steadi

Key Facts about Falls:
- 1/3 of older adults (age 65+) fall each year.
- Many patients who have fallen do not talk about it.

This is What You Can Do:
RITUAL:
- Review self-assessment brochure
- Identify risk factors
- Test gait & balance
- Undertake multifactorial assessment
- Apply interventions
- Later, follow-up

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Injury Prevention and Control

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Key Steps for Fall Prevention
1. Be proactive—ask all patients 65+ if they’ve fallen in the past year.
2. Identify & address fall risk factors:
   • Lower body weakness
   • Gait and balance problems
   • Psychoactive medications
   • Postural dizziness
   • Poor vision
   • Problems with feet and/or shoes
   • Home safety
3. Refer as needed to specialists or community programs.
4. Follow-up with patient within 30 days.

Key Fall Interventions
• Educate patient
• Enhance strength & balance
• Modify medications
• Manage hypotension
• Supplement vitamin D +/- calcium
• Address foot problems
• Optimize vision
• Optimize home safety

Algorithm for Fall Risk Assessment & Interventions