



THIS MONTH

September 2018

## Fatal Falls in Older Adults are on the Rise

Most of us are aware of the importance of “balance training” to prevent falls. Some of us have done either minor or major remodeling so that our homes are free of safety hazards, as we grow older. So, this recent report from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention is alarming!

The report states that in 2016, a total of 29,668 Americans over the age of 65 died as a result of a fall. In 2015 a friend of mine took a terrible fall on black ice, which resulted in his death. Recently I met with a client who lived alone and fell in the garage; it was hours before he got help. Luckily his fall did not result in death, but there was a serious surgery and months of recovery. Falls ended the lives of 61.6 out of every 100,000 older adults last year.

The CDC’s report means that the rate of falls has increased by 31% over a decade. About 25% of older adults have at least one fall a year; resulting in nearly 3 million visits to the Emergency Room. A quarter of these visits ended with a diagnosis of broken bones or traumatic brain injury. These types of injuries can be life changing for older adults and their families.

There are many things that can cause a fall: tripping (hazards and not using safety equipment), medications (the list is long), urinary tract infections, dehydration, strokes, cardiac issues, vision problems, etc. Those with cognitive impairments can be more at risk because of impaired judgment. One of the biggest contributors to falls that I have seen in my practice is the use of pain medications and sleep-aids (both prescription and over-the-counter).

My colleague, Dr. Leslie Kernisan, a Berkeley Gerontologist has written a great article on her blog titled Fall Prevention and Information Tips. Dr. Kernisan’s article is informative especially when the falls are related to medications and health conditions that are prevalent in the Medicare population.

### What should we do to help prevent falls?

- ▶ Exercise and weight training a few days a week – even if it just means doing some arm curls with cans of soup! Try to walk at least 15-30 minutes a day. Stretching is very important. A home exercise program I use is classical stretch “Aging Backwards” on DVD by Miranda Esmonde-White. This DVD is great for balance, strength and also reducing pain. Her DVD’s can be purchased on Amazon.
- ▶ Stay hydrated – drink 5-8 glasses of water a day unless directed otherwise by your physician. Eat a healthy diet – muscles need fuel.
- ▶ Have a safety evaluation of your home – take care of found hazards and add grab bars, night-lights, and non-skid mats in showers.

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## About our Founder



Linda Fodrini-Johnson, MA, MFT, CMC is a Licensed Family Therapist and Certified Care Manager. She has been practicing professional care management (now

called aging life care) since 1984. Linda founded Eldercare Services, a full-service care management and home care company in 1989, which now employs over 200 caring people. Eldercare Services has been providing Bay Area families with care management, home care services (caregiving), advocacy, counseling, support groups and education for 28 years.

## MONTHLY AFFIRMATION

**“I am wise and pro-active with activities that enhance my life.”**

Remove bumps, holes and major cracks from pavement around your home. Consider installing ramps.

- ▶ Wear sensible shoes all the time – no high heels or flip-flops.
- ▶ If you have had a change in health status or a serious fall, ask your doctor to refer you to an Occupational Therapist and a Physical Therapist. These types of therapists can help individualize the support systems you need in your home to prevent future falls. Those that have had one fall are more at risk!

If you happen to live near a Village (a local support organization for the aging community) [www.vtvnetwork.org](http://www.vtvnetwork.org), they often have fall prevention or balance classes, as do senior centers and many health clubs.

When Eldercare Services provides a free home assessment, we have the professional perform a complementary safety evaluation. Our professional Care Managers are the advocates for healthy longer lives and would be happy to work with families or older adults who want to design life plans with safety, joy and well-being at the center of the plan.

Be well, be safe – have the life you envision!

## BE! Brain Enrichment Program

This popular program will return this fall: Brain Enrichment

### Week 1: Cognitive Processes and Information Processing Model

The 90-minute, weekly Brain Enrichment program is now accepting registrants for the 8-week program starting on Monday, September 17, 10:00 AM.

**BE! Brain Enrichment** is an interactive educational experience for adults with normal age-related memory changes. Research shows that continued participation in mentally stimulating activities throughout the lifespan can help slow cognitive decline and has the potential to reduce the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease.

In **eight, 90-minute interactive sessions** participants:

- ▶ Learn about the brain's processes of attention, working memory, long-term memory, reasoning, and problem-solving
- ▶ Participate in mental exercises to engage and stimulate the brain
- ▶ Learn about lifestyle practices for maintaining brain health
- ▶ Practice strategies for improving thinking and memory

One goal of this course is for participants' learning to transfer to tasks of daily living such as attention, word-finding, remembering names, and planning.

This class series will be held at Eldercare Services.

For this session, the cost is \$40 for Lamorinda Village members and \$60 for nonmembers.

<https://lamorinda.helpfulvillage.com/events/2022>

### Week 2: Brain SENSE and Attention

📅 Sept 24<sup>th</sup> ⌚ 10:00am – 11:30am

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This class series will be held at Eldercare Services.

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## 📅 Upcoming Events

### Caring for Someone with Dementia – Reducing Your Stress

📅 Sept 12<sup>th</sup> ⌚ 5:30pm – 7:00pm

Riding the roller coaster of dementia care? If the emotional ups, downs, & loop-di-loops are making your head spin, our Caregiver Survival series is for you!

What you need to know:

Topics include:

- ▶ Responses and reactions to reduce your stress
- ▶ Self-care activities and mini-support group
- ▶ Resources for coaching and support

Advanced registration required. No fee.  
<https://eldercareanswers.com/registration-4/>

Class intended for family caregivers or those dealing with the challenges of aging.

### Dementia: Understanding Behaviors & Finding Solutions

📅 Sept 21<sup>st</sup> ⌚ 2:00pm – 3:30pm

**Presented by:** Laine Hendrickson, MFT, CMC Director of Clinical Services

This class can help provide you with:

- ▶ Tools on how to have conversations about needs when denial is present
- ▶ Giving you permission to “stretch the truth” for dignity, safety and self-esteem
- ▶ Understanding the different types of dementia
- ▶ Understanding why the right diagnosis is important

Advanced registration required. No fee.  
<https://eldercareanswers.com/registration-0/>

### Take Control of Your Health: Steps to Prevent Falls

📅 Oct 19<sup>th</sup> ⌚ 2:00pm – 3:30pm

1 in 3 individuals over the age of 65 fall each year. Falls are the leading cause of injury in older adults and most falls can be prevented!

- ▶ Learn how to prevent falls with simple exercises to help with balance
- ▶ Tips to make your home safe so falls are not in your future
- ▶ Did you know that Medicare will pay for fall prevention therapy?

<http://eldercareanswers.com/registration-5>

## 📍 Location of Events:

Eldercare Services, 1808 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek, CA 94595