



## **New Jersey Falls Prevention Awareness Week September 22-29, 2013**

### **Did You Know?**

- More than one third of adults 65 and older fall each year in the United States.
- In 2010, more than 22,743 older Americans died due to an unintentional fall, 338 of those in NJ.
- In NJ, each day an average of 194 older adults 60+ are treated in emergency departments or as inpatients due to a fall. (2012: Center for Health Statistics)
- In NJ, 75% of falls admitted as inpatients were 60 or older (2012).
- Falls are the #1 cause of brain injury among older adults.

Falls are a serious public health problem. Falling, and the fear of falling, can lead to depression and hopelessness, loss of mobility, and loss of functional independence.

### **The Good News is Falls Are Preventable!**

- Exercise regularly. It increases strength, flexibility and balance.
- Have your eyes checked by a doctor at least once a year.
- Wear the right footwear. The safest shoes fit your feet, have low heels, non-slip soles, and lace up or are secured with fabric fasteners.
- Make your home safer by removing fall hazards and improving lighting.
  - Remove clutter like loose papers, boxes, wires, and phone cords from walk paths and stairways.
  - Make lights brighter, especially in stairways. Consider a nightlight in the bath, bedroom, and hallways.
  - Install bath grips or grab bars in your tub or shower.
  - Use non-skid liners under rugs. Or, better still, remove all throw rugs.
- Ask the doctor or pharmacist to review your medicines-both prescription and over-the-counter.
  - Many medicines can cause side effects such as weakness or dizziness.
  - Taking four or more medications increases your risk for a fall.

**Help make Falls Prevention Awareness Week a success by spreading the word:**

**FALLS ARE PREVENTABLE!!**