



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR

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SENIOR FALL PREVENTION CAMPAIGN BEGINS MAY 29

HONOLULU – The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) and the Hawaii Fall Prevention Consortium in collaboration with AARP, FOODLAND Supermarkets, TIMES Supermarkets, MINA Pharmacies, KTA Superstores, and the Hawaii Community Pharmacy Association are sponsoring the statewide Senior Fall Prevention Awareness Campaign from May 29 to July 31. The campaign features newly released educational videos, free medication reviews, balance testing, and workshops that focus on preventing falls among older adults.

As a result of falls every year in Hawaii, on average 85 seniors die, 1,960 are hospitalized and 8,700 are treated in emergency departments resulting in almost \$120 million dollars in hospital and physician charges. Falls disproportionately affect the elderly and increase dramatically in the years after age 65. Falls and fall-related injuries impose an enormous burden on individuals, society and Hawaii's health care system.

“Every hour, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, a senior is transported by ambulance to an Emergency Room in our state. Yet many falls, and fall-related injuries can be prevented with existing knowledge and technology,” said Health Director Dr. Linda Rosen. “Fall prevention is a major concern for the Department of Health. Through fall prevention efforts, we can help ensure the safety and well-being of our beloved seniors, the fastest growing segment of our population.”

“By conducting in-store reviews of senior medications, as well as balance tests, our pharmacists from the Hawaii Community Pharmacy Association will be contributing an additional service for senior health and well-being,” said Pat Adams, Director of Pharmacy for Foodland Supermarkets.

DOH offers the following important advice to seniors, their family members, and caregivers to prevent falls and fall-related injuries that can limit mobility and independence:

- have your doctor or pharmacist review your medications yearly;
- have your eyes checked annually;
- make your home safer by removing fall hazards, and improve your lighting; and
- exercise regularly; it increases balance and flexibility.

The Senior Fall Prevention Awareness Campaign includes a number of different activities that will unfold in seven major areas.

- May 29: AARP and DOH Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention program will co-sponsor and present “*Simple Steps to Fall Prevention, Better Health and a Home for Life*” an interactive workshop for the general public at McCoy Pavilion, in Ala Moana Beach Park, from 9 a.m. until noon. In addition to fall prevention tips and tai chi exercises there will be presentations on how to make your home comfortable, safe and livable. To register: call toll-free 1-877-926-8300 or go to <http://aarp.cvent.com/simplestepsoahu>
- Beginning June 2: Honolulu buses (da *BUS*) will carry mini-posters that outline four main tips for fall prevention. Buses will continue to carry the messages through July and August.
- June 2 - July 31: More than 40 stores statewide representing seven major market and pharmacy corporations will distribute 82,000 “bag-stuffers” that contain fall prevention tips for seniors plus information on additional resources.
- Throughout June: Nearly 100 in-store pharmacists from sponsoring stores statewide will conduct FREE medication reviews (by appointment) of seniors’ medicines to help identify medications that could cause or contribute to a fall. In addition, pharmacists will also conduct balance tests for those interested in determining their risk for a fall.

- ‘Ōlelo (Public Access Television) will broadcast a 30-minute fall prevention production featuring two new educational videos that give a detailed demonstration of what everyone can do to help prevent falls for our seniors. See your favorite listing for broadcast times in June and July. In addition, new educational videos will be shown at senior clubs on Oahu and are available to any organization. To request a presentation e-mail stanley.j.michaels@doh.hawaii.gov
- June 15: A new GPS fall prevention locator program will launch on the DOH website at www.nogethurt.hawaii.gov. The program will help individuals locate fall prevention services closest to their community.
- Tai Chi for Health Instructor Workshops will be held in several locations: The Plaza at Moanalua on June 28-29, Kona Community Hospital on July 12-13, and the Kauai Therapy & Wellness Center on July 19-20. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, exercise programs such as Tai Chi can increase strength and improve balance, making falls much less likely. For information on these workshops, call (808) 733-9202.

Go to www.nogethurt.hawaii.gov or call (808) 733-9202 for more information about fall prevention for seniors.

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