



## Are You a Family Caregiver?

Help for Working Caregivers is a benefit to help support employees struggling with eldercare responsibilities and work/life balance. This benefit is not only to support those in the throes of caregiving, but has many resources and tools to help employees be pro-active in planning for the future needs of an aging loved one.

## Fall Prevention

Falls are an issue that is very common among older adults, and a topic that gets extra attention during this time of year. Cold weather, snow and icy conditions can increase the risk of falls, but falls can happen anywhere. As seen below, falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries.

### Falls Statistics\*

- Falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries
- 1 in 4 older adults fall annually
- 1 out of 5 falls cause serious injury
- Every 11 seconds a senior is treated in the ER for a fall
- Every 19 minutes an older adult dies from a fall

### Common Risk Factors

- Physical – changes in the body that increase risk of falls
- Behavioral – things seniors do and don't do that increase risk of falls
- Environmental – hazards in or outside the home

\*Source: CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecationalsafety/falls/adultfalls.html>)

### Ways to help reduce fall risks

1. Exercise and improve balance
2. Talk to family and health care provider
3. Review medications regularly
4. Get vision and hearing checked annually
5. Ensure proper nutrition
6. Keep the home safe

### Final Tips

- Engage in conversation before a crisis
- Start prevention in middle age (40-60 years old)
- Understand fall history
- Keep a journal (where, when, how, what you were doing, and how you were feeling)

A Fall Prevention Conversation Guide\* can be found at [www.ncoa.org/fallprevention](http://www.ncoa.org/fallprevention)

\*Published by the National Council on Aging & National Alliance for Caregiving

Learn more about this and other caregiving topics at

[HelpForWorkingCaregivers.com](http://HelpForWorkingCaregivers.com)

**Username: creighton**

**Password: help2blue**



## Tips to Help Winterize for Falls

“Winterize” shoes, boots, and assistive devices

- Attach spikeless ice and snow shoe gripper sole covers to shoes for extra stability
  - Attach an ice gripper cane tip that has spikes on the bottom
  - Choose winter shoes with rubber soles to maintain traction on slippery surfaces
  - Consider converting wheelchair tires to snow tires
- Carry kitty litter for slick surfaces
    - Carry a small bag filled with a lightweight kitty litter to cast out on slick surfaces
  - Give the gift of falls prevention
    - Fall alarm systems/emergency alert system
    - Tall toilets for the bathroom or toilet seat riser
    - New eyeglasses or lenses
    - Grab bars
    - Install railings on both sides of stairways
    - Automatic lights/light timers for stairways and by outside entrances
    - Small flashlights to attach to keys, hats, and coat buttons

## Seniors and Post-Holiday Blues

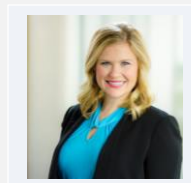
After the holidays, many people feel relief knowing the hustle and bustle is over, and yet that relief can be replaced with feelings of depression, especially for seniors. Here are a few ideas to help your senior loved one fight the post-holiday blues:

- If you are concerned, encourage your loved one to first see a doctor. Perhaps it’s time for a physical and a medical professional can help determine whether there is a physical cause for their depression.
- Help him or her try to continue with regular activities or stay with a routine as much as possible
- Make sure they keep in regular contact with family and friends
- Try a new hobby
- Exercise is a great way to stay upbeat and healthy
- Companionship is a wonderful antidote to the holiday blues. Perhaps it’s time for your loved one to make some new friends. Many senior centers have daily meals and enjoyable activities.

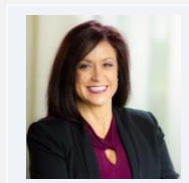
For more resources on stress-related topics, go to [HelpForWorkingCaregivers.com](http://HelpForWorkingCaregivers.com)

## QUESTIONS

If you have questions or need advice, please visit the [Help for Working Caregivers website](http://HelpForWorkingCaregivers.com) and connect with our experts.



Lakelyn Hogan  
Gerontologist



LaNita Knoke  
Nurse



Molly Carpenter  
Alzheimer's