



# SENIORCARE OPTIONS

[www.seniorcareopt.com](http://www.seniorcareopt.com)

770-579-9177

**Candor. Compassion.  
Competence.**

Aging Life Care Management  
for the Metro Atlanta Area  
Assisting medically frail seniors,  
disabled adults, & their caregivers

## Keep the falls out of Fall!



**Home – it's where “the heart is” and the place where most aging adults will say that they wish to live. The ability to do this safely is crucial to remaining as independent as possible, with the lowest level of care needed, and in one's chosen environment.**

Research shows that for those over 65, FALLS remain the leading cause of injury related death, the leading cause of traumatic brain injury, and can lead to many debilitating injuries like fractures. The very home in which one wants to stay is where 6 out of 10 falls happen. Thus, a few observations, changes, and checks can make a HUGE difference in reducing this risk!

### Here are 5 areas that can greatly affect one's fall risk:

- **Trips and Slips** – What may cause someone to trip or slip? This could include unsecured rugs/carpets, electrical/phone cords, uneven surfaces, small furniture, pet bowls, etc. Look for anything below knee height to potentially be a risk! Wet areas and leaks (such as the area below the refrigerator ice dispenser) can be problematic – as well as surprising things like a little missed cooking spray or furniture polish may leave a very slick spot on the floor!
- **All things bathroom and stairs** – Are handrails or grab bars needed? Are surfaces non-slip? Are unnecessary items removed? Are things easy to reach – such as the toilet paper, lightswitches, or hand-held shower heads?
- **Proper lighting** – Main walkways should be well-lit with easy accessibility to lightswitches. Nightlights (motion detecting can help) and appropriately-positioned working flashlights can be great to reduce nighttime falls.
- **What is within reach for one's abilities (and height, for that matter)** – This may involve a reorganization of most-used items to the level that is of most comfort. Less-used items can be placed on higher shelves and retrieved with assistance. Is a reacher needed? Is the sofa, most used chairs, and bed frame at an appropriate height? How difficult is it to get to the mailbox or to do laundry – especially if either involve distance or stairs?
- **Physical fitness** – Multiple studies show that remaining as physically active as possible can decrease one's fall risk – particularly if doing exercises assisting with balance, core strengthening, and lower-body focus! Tai Chi is becoming very popular due to the low stress on joints and focus on relaxation, balance, weight transfer, gait, posture, and coordination. Many gyms have SilverSneakers® Fitness Programs that offer exercise programs for active older adults. There are also multiple programs that are offered through local Senior Centers, churches, and in-home programs. Ask around and get involved!

There are also many things from Personal Emergency Response Systems (which are pendants that are worn to press in the instance of a fall or emergency to attain help) to objective on-site environmental

assessments by clinical professionals – such as Occupational Therapists or Aging Life Care Managers – to identify risks and offer solutions. There are many medical conditions and concerns that can also lead to an individual's increased fall risk. (Please see this month's blog on [www.seniorcareopt.com](http://www.seniorcareopt.com) for more information)

These, along with environmental factors, should be assessed and reduced to our greatest ability. Every situation will be unique and will require different solutions. It takes everyone's willingness to observe, discuss, and change to have the greatest effect on this often avoidable risk.

### Resources Available

#### CDC – Home and Recreational Safety – Older Adult Falls – <http://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecreational/safety/falls/>

The CDC has a program called STEADI (Stopping Elderly Accidents, Deaths, and Injuries) – They have a wonderful site for information and education regarding fall prevention. They also have a great and comprehensive checklist called “Check for Safety – A Home Fall Prevention Checklist for Older Adults” that is available through this site. [http://www.cdc.gov/steady/pdf/check\\_for\\_safety-custom.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/steady/pdf/check_for_safety-custom.pdf)

The CDC also has a great page on **Tai Chi Principles for Fall Prevention** [http://www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Falls/compendium/pdf/Vo\\_ukelatos.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Falls/compendium/pdf/Vo_ukelatos.pdf)

**Exercise & Physical Activity: Your Everyday Guide from the National Institute on Aging** - <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/publication/exercise-physical-activity/introduction>

### Support Group Information

Lacy Doremus, LMSW, C-ASWCM, facilitates a monthly caregiver support group at 7pm at Presbyterian Village - conference room between Hearthstone and Wellness center. The address is 2000 E West Connector Austell, GA and meetings are held the last Tuesday of each month at 7pm.

### About SeniorCare Options

SeniorCare Options provides Certified Aging Life Care Management throughout the Metro-Atlanta area. Our team consists of Master's level clinicians in the fields of counseling, social work, therapeutic recreation, and registered nursing. Our backgrounds are vast and specific to the current clinical needs of our clients and their families who may be in transition, have chronic or difficult-to-manage conditions, and who require increased guidance. Our interdisciplinary focus, extensive experience, and heightened sensitivity to their specific needs prove to be an invaluable asset to families faced with the maze of options and care needs. **For more information** regarding Aging Life Care Management services, our support groups, or to inquire about requesting services for someone under your care, **please contact us at: 770-579-9177 or [brandih@seniorcareopt.com](mailto:brandih@seniorcareopt.com).**