

OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR GLENN JACOBS



MEDIA RELEASE

KNOX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Free event for National Falls Prevention Awareness Day

Knoxville, Tenn. -- The Knox County Health Department (KCHD) and the Knoxville-Knox County Senior Safety Task Force will celebrate National Falls Prevention Awareness Day with a free, educational event on Friday, Sept. 20 from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the John T. O'Connor Senior Center, 611 Winona Street.

"Falls continue to be a major threat to older adults. They are costly, not only medically but physically and emotionally," KCHD Public Health Educator Rachel Frazier said. "They can reduce a senior's ability to remain independent, which can lead to isolation and depression. Falls, though, don't have to be an inevitable part of aging. There are proven ways to reduce falls and that's what we will share with seniors, their caretakers and adult children at this event. "

Attendees will have the opportunity to receive balance, vision and bone health screenings, as well as an opportunity to talk to a pharmacist about their medications. Speakers at this event include Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs and KCHD Senior Director Dr. Martha Buchanan.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2.8 million adults aged 65 and older are treated in emergency departments for fall injuries each year and more than 800,000 are hospitalized. One out of five falls causes a serious injury such as broken bones or a head injury. The direct medical costs of falls in 2015 totaled more than \$50 billion. Locally, in 2016, falls were the primary reason Knox County adults aged 65 years or older went to the hospital.

Sponsored by the National Council on Aging for the past eleven years, National Falls Prevention Awareness Day seeks to unite professionals, older adults, caregivers and family members to raise awareness and prevent falls in the older adult population. Partners in the Sept. 20 event include BenchMark Physical Therapy, Praise 96.3, Senior Citizens Home Assistance Service (SCHAS), AARP, Riggs Drugstore, Knoxville-Knox CAC Office of Aging, AAAD/ETHRA, Covenant Health, Osteostrong and Lions Club International.

KCHD convened the Knoxville-Knox County Senior Safety Task Force in 2008 to address concerns about falls in the older population. More information is available by contacting KCHD Public Health Educator Rachel Frazier at (865) 215-5175.



About Knox County Health Department

As the first health department in Tennessee to achieve national voluntary accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board, the Knox County Health Department (KCHD) is dedicated to ensuring the conditions in which every resident can be healthy. KCHD investigates disease outbreaks, identifies community health threats, conducts extensive outreach and education, prepares for public health emergencies, provides and connects the public with medical care, enforces food safety and air quality laws, and more. For more information, visit www.knoxcounty.org/health.

