A Matter of Balance: Managing Concerns About Falls

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• Helps older adults take on both the challenges and opportunities of longer life.

• Lifespan provides a continuum of direct non-medical services and unbiased information, guidance and advocacy for older adults and caregivers.
What Do We Know about Falls and Older Adults?

• Common
• Predictable
• Preventable
• Not a natural part of aging
What Do We Know About the Fear of Falling?

- It is reasonable to be concerned about falls - safety is important
- 1/3 to 1/2 of older adults acknowledge fear of falling
- Fear of falling is associated with:
  - decreased satisfaction with life
  - increased frailty
  - depression
  - decreased mobility and social activity
- Fear of falling is a risk factor for falls
  - Increased risk for falls as a result of deconditioning
What Do We Know About A Matter of Balance (MOB)?

A Matter of Balance is a program:

• Based upon research conducted by the Roybal Center for Enhancement of Late-Life Function at Boston University

• Designed to reduce the fear of falling and increase the activity levels of older adults who have concerns about falls

• Overseen by Maine Health
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During 8 two-hour classes, participants learn:

• To view falls and fear of falling as controllable

• To set realistic goals for increasing activity

• To change their environment to reduce fall risk factors

• To promote exercise to increase strength and balance
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What Happens During Classes?

• Group discussion
• Problem-solving
• Skill building
• Assertiveness training
• Exercise training
• Videos
• Sharing practical solutions
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Who could benefit from participation in MOB?
Anyone who:

- is concerned about falls
- has sustained a fall in the past
- restricts activities because of concerns about falling
- is interested in improving flexibility, balance and strength
- is age 60 or older, ambulatory and able to problem-solve
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What Happens During Classes?

Exercises are a key component to the program

- Introduced in Session 3, incorporated into each subsequent class
- Focus on important “balance joints”
- Focus on upper and lower body range of motion, coordination, flexibility
- Emphasis on lower body strength
- Importance of individualized action plans, exercise goals, working within comfort zone
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What Happens During Classes?

• Discuss “fall-ty” habits, fall hazards in the home and community
• Develop a sense of self-awareness, learn to be assertive about own needs to prevent falls
• Evaluate home environment
• Professional guest speaker (PT, RN, etc.)
• Discuss “how to fall” and get up from a fall
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- Designed to reduce the fear of falling and increase the activity levels of older adults who have concerns about falls

A MATTER OF BALANCE – FALL PREVENTION WORKSHOP

This eight-week workshop is proven to help reduce the fear of falling and increase the activity levels of older adults. The workshop is for people who are:

- Concerned about falls
- Have sustained a fall in the past
- Restrict activities because of concerns about falling
- Looking to improve flexibility, balance and strength
- Age 60 or older, ambulatory and able to problem-solve.

Workshops are offered year-round in diverse locations around Monroe County. Call us at 585-287-6439 to learn more.

Go to the EVENTS page to view and register for upcoming classes.
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Demonstration: Examples of MOB Exercises
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Positive Self-Reported Data:

- 99 % - more comfortable talking about fear of falling
- 100 % - feel comfortable increasing activity
- 100 % - plan to continue exercising
- 100 % - would recommend A Matter of Balance
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Participant Reports/Comments:

• Increased confidence in taking a walk, climbing stairs, carrying bundles without falling

• More confident about increasing their strength, finding ways to reduce falls, and protecting themselves if they do fall

• An increase in the amount they exercise on a regular basis

• Fewer falls after taking MOB
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Participant Reports/Comments:
• “With self-determination, I can better my problem.”
• “Using tote bag to bring folded laundry upstairs.”
• “Added 4 handrails to the existing ones in my home.”
• “You guys did a great job, now the rest is up to me!”
• “Stopped doing things the old way and have tried to find ways to do things the safer way!”
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Workshops are led by Peer Leaders/Coaches:

• Volunteers who complete 8 hours of training
• Attend team meetings, special lunch recognitions
• Various backgrounds including PAs, teachers, RNs, fitness instructors
• Enthusiastic, able to lead small groups
• Anyone passionate to assist older adults is welcome!!
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• Where are classes held?

• Community-based settings including:
  • Senior Centers
  • Retirement/Residential Communities
  • YMCAs
  • Libraries
  • Churches
  • Assisted Living
  • Lifespan
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How Do I Make A Referral?

• NY Connects
• Lifespan website
• Phone inquiry, e-mail
• Contact Sarah Otis, Health and Wellness Coordinator
  • 585-287-6439
  • sotis@lifespan-roch.org
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Lifespan Also Offers MOB for Caregivers and Care Receivers

• Finger Lakes Caregiver Institute
  • Funded by DOH, in partnership with Alzheimer’s Association, Rochester & Finger Lakes chapters
  • Provides programs and services to support care partners of loved ones with Alzheimer’s Disease or dementia.
  • Diagnosis is not required for service.
  • Covers the following counties: Chemung, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, Yates.
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Lifespan Also Offers MOB for Caregivers and Care Receivers

• Finger Lakes Caregiver Institute
  • Offers activities where care partner and care receiver participate together.

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