

PREVENTIVE HEALTH CARE MEASURES (updated 9/2020)

Preventive health measures are those steps you take each day to maximize your health and functional independence. Here we share evidence-based information with some local resources on the following strategies:

- Fall prevention
- Home safety
- Immunizations
- Medic alerts jewelry
- Physical exercise
- Safe driving

The USC Verdugo Hills Hospital Community Resource Center for Aging can be reached by telephone at 818.949.4033 to discuss information and options for your consideration in managing your health and wellness. While we cannot endorse or prescribe specific practices for you, this information is designed to educate and can be discussed more fully with your healthcare provider(s).

Fall Prevention

Each year, one in three adults over the age of 65 falls and 2 million are treated in emergency departments for fall-related injuries. The long-term consequences of fall injuries, such as hip fractures and traumatic brain injuries, can impact the health and independence of older adults.

Studies show that a combination of interventions can reduce falls significantly. By taking preventive actions, you can reduce your risk of falling.

Since half of all falls occur at home, correct potential hazards in your home.

- Remove tripping hazards, such as shoes, books and clothes, from the floor and stairs.
- Install handrails and lights on staircases.
- Remove small throw rugs or use double-sided tape to keep rugs from slipping.
- Keep frequently used items in cabinets that you can reach easily without using a step stool.
- Put grab bars inside and next to the tub/shower and next to your toilet.
- Use non-slip mats in the bathtub and on shower floors.
- Improve the lighting in your home and have your eyes checked annually.

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Experts recommend a physical activity regimen with balance, strength training, and flexibility components. **USC Verdugo Hills Hospital offers “Fall Proof” classes designed to improve balance/mobility.** Call Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation for information: 818.952.2294.

USC’s Leonard Davis School of Gerontology “Stop Falls” website offers a wealth of resources, including information on balance and mobility.

[Individuals & Families](#)

Home Safety

Many older Americans are injured in and around their homes every year. Check this website for a complete home safety checklist.

[Safety for Older Consumers – Home Safety Checklist](#)

Immunizations

As we get older, our immune systems weaken, putting us at higher risk for certain diseases. Vaccinations are the pinnacle of prevention of serious and often life-threatening diseases. The following vaccines are recommended for those 50 years and older.

- Seasonal Flu (influenza) vaccine every year.
- Td or Tdap vaccine (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis) every 10 years.
- Pneumococcal vaccines, which protect against pneumococcal disease, including infections in the lungs and bloodstream.
- Shingrix vaccine, which protects against shingles.

Adults with health conditions such as diabetes; cardiovascular, lung, liver, or renal disease or a weakened immune system, may need additional vaccines.

[Recommended Vaccines for Adults](#)

Medical Alerts Jewelry

Medical alert jewelry provides security and safety. These are designed to alert others of a specific condition, illness, or allergy during an emergency. Conditions that may need medical alert jewelry are: Alzheimer’s/memory-impairment, blood thinner medication, drug, food or insect allergies, epilepsy and hearing, sight or mental impairments, special needs for children and many others.

Contact:

MedicAlert Foundation: 800.432.5378

American Medical ID: 800.363.5985

Physical Activity

Physical Activity is one of the most important things you can do for your health. Its benefits for the body and the mind include improved heart health, improved bone health, improved fat burning, decreased anxiety and depression and increased energy. Walking, hiking, bicycling, swimming, yoga, conditioning machines and aerobic classes all are beneficial.

How much physical activity do older adults need? Check out these recommendations:

[How much physical activity do older adults need? | Physical Activity](#)

USC Verdugo Hills Hospital offers “Get Up and Go” classes. Call Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation for information. 818.952.2294.

Safe Driving

It’s a worthwhile investment of your time to refresh your driving skills. AAA offers driving improvement courses for seniors to keep driving knowledge fresh while reducing risk to you, your passengers and others on the road.

[Driver Improvement Courses For Seniors](#)

Senior Guide for Safe Driving available at:

www.dmv.ca.gov.