



*Our Vision: Milwaukee County will be a national leader in the prevention of falls in the adult population through community education, collaboration, and innovation*



## **Milwaukee County Falls Prevention Coalition Resource Series**

### **Medication Safety to Prevent Falls**

#### **Background**

- Medications play a significant role in falls and are critical to fall prevention.
- Taking multiple medications (polypharmacy) is associated with a greater number of falls, particularly when this includes sleeping and antidepressant medications.
- Abruptly stopping medications or changing how you take them may result in additional side effects.

#### **Practical Tips**

- Make a list of all your prescription and over-the-counter medications.
- Talk with your provider or pharmacist about your medications regularly as well as anytime you want to stop or change how you take them.
- Use a pill organizer to ensure you take your medications as prescribed.
- Ask your pharmacy for accommodations such as large print labels or pre-filled medication trays if you have difficulty reading the instructions on pill bottles.
- Have your medications reviewed each time you get a new prescription.
- Be aware of non-prescription medications that contain sleep aids including painkillers with “PM” in their names as these may cause balance issues and dizziness.
- When taking medications that may cause dizziness, change positions slowly and get steady before beginning to walk.
- When taking a new medication with side effects such as dizziness, take additional safety precautions until you know how these affect you.

#### **Electronic Resources**

[Medication Safety](#) – CDC STEADI resources

[Benefits Checkup](#) – National Council on Aging resource to find financial assistance to pay prescription and other bills.

[Medicines: Use Them Safely](#) – Easy to read resources on variety of medication topics from National Institute on Aging

[My Medication Record](#) – Printable form to track medications from National Council on Aging

MediSafe – Medication reminders and information for [Apple](#) or [Android](#)

#### References:

Richardson, K., Bennett, K., & Kenny, R. A. (2014). Polypharmacy including falls risk-increasing medications and subsequent falls in community-dwelling middle-aged and older adults. *Age and ageing*, 44(1), 90-96.