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## KEEPING OLDER ADULTS SAFE AND INDEPENDENT THROUGH FALLS PREVENTION EDUCATION

### Contact:

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**Martin County, FL** – The Florida Department of Health in Martin County is promoting the importance of falls prevention among older adults for the 9<sup>th</sup> annual Falls Prevention Awareness Day celebrated on Sept. 22, 2016, the first day of fall. This year's theme is focused on supporting ready, steady and balanced lifestyles for older adults.

Unintentional falls are the leading cause of fatal and non-fatal injuries among Florida residents ages 65 years and older. In 2014, 2,445 older adults were fatally injured in a fall and there were an additional 50,730 residents hospitalized for non-fatal injuries.

According to the National Council on Aging (NCOA), there are several measures that can reduce the risk of falls:

- Exercise regularly. NCOA cites several evidence-based programs that are proven to help older adults reduce their risk, including Tai Chi and the Otago program.
- Consult with a health care professional about a fall risk assessment.
- Have medications reviewed by a doctor or pharmacist.
- Get eyes and ears checked at least annually.
- Ensure the home environment is safe and hazard free.

Information and education, including risk and balance assessments and Tai Chi classes for better balance is available by contacting Floridians Fighting Falls at 772-932-7264 or logging on to [www.fightingfalls.org](http://www.fightingfalls.org)

For more information, please visit the department's Injury Prevention Section [website](#) for Older Adults Falls Prevention.

### About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts. Follow us on Twitter at [@HealthyFla](#) and on [Facebook](#). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit [www.FloridaHealth.gov](http://www.FloridaHealth.gov)

