



The Link



Connecting You to Richland County

R I C H L A N D C O U N T Y C O M M I S S I O N O N A G I N G

NATIONAL FALL PREVENTION DAY

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Socialization can help seniors maintain a sharp mind
- Physical activity can make a big impact on arthritis pain
- Part D open enrollment begins Oct. 15th
- Medicare 101 breaks down the basics of Medicare

September 23rd was the first day of fall, and it's a great time to think about ways to reduce the risk of falling for seniors in our community. Falls cause 83% of the injuries that require hospitalization, and even more seriously, 47% of deaths in the elderly.



TAKE A STAND TO PREVENT FALLS

Some things you can do to reduce your risk of falling are:

- Check your vision every year and clean your glasses often.
- Check your health, especially your blood pressure.
- Check your prescriptions for side effects that affect balance.
- Exercise, walk, stretch. Any movement tones muscles and improves balance.
- Use handrails, canes, and walkers.
- See a foot doctor if your feet are swollen, numb, or painful.

Some things you can do in your home to reduce your risk of falling are:

- Use nightlights to prevent you from tripping over things in the dark.
- Put double sided carpet tape under your throw rugs.
- Use non-skid strips in your bathtub or shower.
- Put up textured "tread strips" on your stairs and install handrails.
- Clean up "all" clutter from your floor that could be a tripping hazard.

And in your neighborhood:

- Do your part to keep your sidewalks and paths cleaned off.
- Trim trees and bushes that hang over sidewalks and paths.
- Repair or replace broken, uneven concrete.
- Install adequate lighting for paths and sidewalks.

To learn more visit:

ncoa.org/FallsPrevention

For a self assessment of your fall risk, please see page 2. If you would like a FREE in-depth risk assessment please contact our office at 433-3701.

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SAFETY STARTS WITH YOU!

Many falls that happen at home are due to environmental hazards. Use this time and the checklist below to take an honest look at your home, habits, and other potentially hazardous areas. If you find an unsafe condition, use the recommendations to the right to make positive changes. If you feel you would like a more in-depth assessment, call 433-3701 and arrange for someone to come to your home to assess you free of charge.

HAZARD	ACCEPTABLE	UNSAFE/NEEDS CHANGE	WHAT YOU CAN DO
Throw rugs/carpets			Repair or replace torn carpet. Remove all throw rugs, tack down, or use non-skid rugs
Cluttered Walkways			Rearrange furniture, remove clutter & obstacles. **Make sure you have room to freely maneuver with a walker/cane.
Cords in walkway			Remove cords from walkways or tape/secure cords to one side of the walkway
Loose fitting shoes			Wear proper fitting shoes with a good grip and low heels
Standing to dress self			Sit to dress/undress
Slippery surfaces in bathroom area			Use non-slip bathmats in tub/shower. Install grab bars near shower, toilet. **Make sure bathrugs are secured to the floor
Hard to reach items			Avoid using a step-stool. Store commonly used items at waist level.
Insufficient lighting			Replace light bulbs, use nightlights, and leave lights on in high traffic areas. Use colored adhesive tape to mark steps
Unsafe Chairs			Avoid chairs that rock or swivel. Use chairs with armrests and make sure feet touch the ground.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO KNOW IF YOU ARE AN INPATIENT OR AN OUTPATIENT?

Did you know that even if you stay in the hospital overnight, you might still be considered an “outpatient”? Knowing whether you are classified as an inpatient or an outpatient will affect how much you have to pay and what Medicare will cover.

You’re an **inpatient** starting the day you’re formally admitted to the hospital with a doctor’s order. The day before you’re discharged is your last inpatient day.

You’re an **outpatient** if you’re getting emergency department services, observation services, outpatient surgery, lab test or x-rays, *and the doctor hasn’t written an order to admit you to the hospital as an inpatient.* In these cases, you’re an outpatient **even if you spend the night at the hospital.**

What do I pay as an inpatient?

- Medicare Part A covers inpatient hospital

services. Generally this means you pay (or your Medicare supplement pays) a onetime deductible for all your hospital services for the first 60 days you’re in the hospital.

- Medicare Part B covers most of your doctor services when you’re an inpatient. You pay 20% of the Medicare-approved amount for the doctor services after paying the Part B deductible.

What do I pay as an outpatient?

- Medicare Part B covers outpatient hospital services. Generally, this means you pay a copayment for each individual outpatient hospital service. This amount may vary by service.

- Part B also covers most

of your doctor services when you’re a hospital outpatient. You pay 20% of the Medicare-approved amount after you pay the Part B deductible.

- Usually the prescription and the over-the-counter drugs you get in an outpatient setting *are not* covered by Part B.

Knowing your status of inpatient or outpatient can have a big impact on your pocketbook. Many times, people assume they are an inpatient when in fact they haven’t been admitted to the hospital. A good rule is to ALWAYS ask your doctor whether you are an inpatient or outpatient.



A "HOEDOWN" FOR EVERYONE

The sound of music and laughter filled the air at the Sidney Senior Center during their first annual hoe-down on September 19th. Seniors throughout the area arrived at the Center to take in an afternoon of food, fun and some special live music. The Sidney Seniors would like to thank everyone who attended and those who volunteered. An extra special thanks goes to Teresa Larson, Fairview Senior Center Cook, for her donation of delicious apple cobbler for the event.



Delores Frison won the contest for Best Western Wear



Harold Lorenz entertained the crowd with his harmonica



Irene Emly & daughter Juanita Johnson lead the crowd in a spirited sing along



COOKING FOR COMPANY

“I love the people and the camaradery that you get when cooking for them!” That’s what Richard Reidman says when asked why he likes cooking for the Sidney Senior Center. He has been cooking at the Center for over 12 years.

While he says it suits him perfectly, it is quite a change from his work in the past. Richard was a teacher for 36 years at Sidney High School. From there he went on to be the County Superintendent for another 8 years before retiring.

Some of his favorite things to cook are Roast Beef dinners and different kinds of soups. Mostly he states “I just like to cook for groups of people!”

Not only has he been committed to working, he has been married to his wife Virginia for 51 years. They have four children, 2 boys and 2 girls and many grandchildren to spoil.

The Sidney Senior Center serves congregate meals on Mondays and Fridays at



11:30 AM. They are also open on Thursdays from 1PM-4PM for cards and socialization. All Richland County Senior Centers encourage visitors and welcome newcomers.

SENIOR CENTERS SERVE MORE THAN MEALS

In Richland County we are fortunate to have not one but FOUR Senior Centers and Congregate meal programs. Each center has its own unique feel but they are all vitally important to the Commission on Aging’s goal of supporting the Older American’s Act Nutrition Program.

As you may have guessed, the OAA Nutrition program aims to promote the health and well-being of older individuals by assisting them in gaining access to nutritious meals but it also does much more than that. The program specifically seeks to promote socialization and camaraderie between seniors in our area.

Just as physical activity is linked to vitality, socialization is linked to seniors maintaining a sharp mind, remaining connected to the world around them, increasing feelings of happiness and developing a sense of belonging. These benefits also contribute to

a seniors physical health because our natural immune system is negatively affected by social isolation. In fact, a January 2010 article by Gary M. Skole (Ezine Articles) says that those who interact with others during the cold/flu season actually contract *less* colds and illnesses than those who spend most of their time alone.

So the next time you want to meet a friend for lunch, consider doing it at your local senior center in either Fairview, Sidney, Savage or Lambert. While you’re guaranteed to get a hot, delicious meal, you might find yourself contributing to your health or boosting the health of your neighbor.

****Remember:** Congregate meals is *not* an entitlement program. While participants are given the opportunity to contribute toward the cost of the meal with a suggested donation, no one can be denied service because they can’t or won’t contribute.

MANAGING ARTHRITIS PAIN

Years ago, people with arthritis pain were told to “rest their joints” but those days are long gone! Most adults suffering from arthritis will see a reduction of pain, improved function, mobility, mood and quality of life once they start engaging in targeted physical activity.

The Arthritis Exercise Program offered through the Richland County Commission on Aging and the Montana Arthritis Program can help you increase your muscle coordination, balance, flexibility and stamina as well as reduce pain and stiffness. The 6 week course is ideal for all fitness levels from the extremely active to those who prefer or need to exercise while sitting in a chair.

The class will be offered on Tuesdays and Fridays from 10am to 11am at the Community Services Building beginning on November 3. The suggested donation for the course is \$10/person. This cost covers the entire 6 weeks, the participant’s activity log and pedometer.

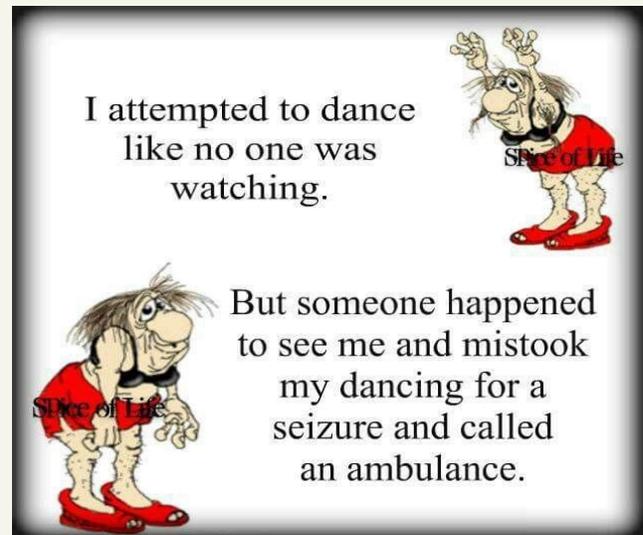
To get the most benefit from the program, participants are encouraged to attend as regularly as possible. To sign up, please call the Commission

on Aging at 433-3701.

**Class begins November 3
Tuesdays & Fridays
10am-11am**

**Community Services Building
1201 W Holly, Sidney**

Conference Room 201: 1st room at the top of the stairs (an elevator is available if needed)



EXERCISES FOR THE OVER 55'S

STAND ON A COMFORTABLE SURFACE.

WITH A 5 LB POTATO SACK IN EACH HAND, EXTEND YOUR ARMS HORIZONTALLY & HOLD FOR ONE MINUTE, THEN RELAX.

EACH DAY YOU'LL FIND THAT YOU CAN HOLD THIS POSITION A LITTLE LONGER.

AFTER 2 WEEKS, MOVE UP TO A 10 LB POTATO SACK IN EACH HAND.

AFTER 1 MONTH TRY 50 LB POTATO SACKS.

EVENTUALLY, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO LIFT 100 LB SACKS IN EACH HAND, HOLDING YOUR ARMS OUT STRAIGHT FOR 1 MINUTE.

AFTER YOU FEEL CONFIDENT AT THIS LEVEL.....**PUT A POTATO IN EACH SACK!!!**



PART D OPEN ENROLLMENT: IT DOES AFFECT YOU



October 15th marks an important date for everyone enrolled in Medicare; it's the start of the Part D open enrollment

period. Part D is your prescription insurance, and unlike many other types of insurance (car insurance, life insurance, etc.) there is no customer loyalty advantages associated with it. In fact, keeping the same insurance simply out of loyalty can affect your pocketbook in a BIG way.

Prescription insurance companies work off of and cover prescriptions based on their "formulary" and the Tier associated with your current prescription. Formularies can change often so its important you keep up with those changes.

Tier 1 drugs are typically cheaper than Tier 3 drugs so if the formulary moves your current prescription to a higher Tier, you will see an increase in your co-pays. Fortunately, sometimes your drug will move to a lower Tier which will decrease your costs. Either way, knowing how your plan covers your prescription helps you plan ahead and find the best fit for you.

The easiest way to combat any changes that may affect you is to take advantage of the Part D Open Enrollment Period. By using the plan finder found at www.medicare.gov, you or your SHIP counselor can help you find a plan based on your current medication and dosage.

If your current plan is no longer

your best option, you can enroll in the new plan anytime between October 15th and December 7th. Any changes you make to your plan will become effective on January 1st.

SHIP (Senior Health Insurance Program) Counselors can assist you free of charge. SHIP Counselors in Richland County include:

- **Jodi Berry-Commission on Aging Phone: 433-3701**
- **Felicia Iversen-Commission on Aging Phone: 433-3701**
- **Kelly Wilkinson-Crestwood Support Services Phone: 433-4681**

In order to be seen in a timely matter and as a courtesy to other clients, appointments are appreciated and encouraged.

MEDICARE MADE EASY: UPCOMING CLASSES

If you are nearing 65, you are probably being inundated with news about Medicare. Unfortunately, Medicare can be *confusing* if you aren't familiar with it. Do you know the difference between Part A and Part B? Part D? Medigap Policies? How about which deadlines apply to you? Or how does Medicare work if you still have employer insurance?

At our upcoming Medicare 101 class, we will break down each of the Medicare pieces so you can find out how they affect you. The two-hour class is free of charge and can be a huge benefit for those wanting to understand the way Medicare

works. Participants will be given the opportunity to ask questions and find out where to go if they have more questions down the road. Class size is limited so reserve your seat as soon as possible by calling 433-3701.



Medicare 101

Friday, October 9

5:30-7:30pm

Community Services Building

1201 W Holly, Sidney

A soup and sandwich dinner will be provided

WE'RE ON THE WEB!
WWW.RICHLAND.ORG



**R I C H L A N D C O U N T Y
C O M M I S S I O N O N
A G I N G**

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Bringing Seniors and Services Together

**THANK YOU!! TO OUR MEALS ON
WHEELS VOLUNTEERS!!!**

JULY

CHURCH OF JESUS
CHRIST OF LATTER DAY
SAINTS

TRINITY LUTHERAN
CHURCH

MIKE & LOU MOHL
BRORSON 4H CLUB

SIDNEY EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION

AUGUST

RICHLAND COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION

ST. MATTHEW'S
CATHOLIC CHURCH

ASSEMBLY OF GOD
CHURCH

SEPTEMBER

ASSEMBLY OF GOD
CHURCH

FAITH ALLIANCE
CHURCH

PEOPLES
CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH

A white sticky note with a red pushpin at the top left corner, containing the handwritten text "THANK YOU" in black ink.

THANK
YOU

**"THANK YOU" TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEER DRIVERS.
YOUR SERVICE IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!!!**