

BETter Living ...

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August 16, 2018

Keys to Embracing Aging – Practice Being Safe

Through the years, we have been taught ways to be safe. Whether it was to look both ways before crossing the street, wearing a seatbelt, or locking the doors. We learned at a young age how to be safe. We will explore ways to be safe regarding your home, vehicle, and health. This topic will be covered over the course of two weeks.

Home Safety

- Make your house number visible – in case of emergencies.
- Lock doors and windows – high quality locks are important.
- Sound the alarm – install smoke detectors on every floor of your home and carbon monoxide detectors near sleeping areas. Test the detectors every day-light savings time.
- Avoid overload – do not overload extension cords.
- Watch cord placement – cords can be tripping hazards.
- Don't get tippy – bookcases and other furniture should be secured to the wall, so they don't tip over.
- Paint safe – make sure you have enough ventilation.
- Childproof – outlets, appliances, electronics, stairs, windows.
- Get grounded – major appliances should be grounded.
- Plan your escape – practice your fire escape plan with your family.
- Keep extinguishers handy – kitchen, bathroom, basement are all good locations.
- Create a safe exit – if your home has two floors, consider purchasing an escape ladder.
- Unplug appliances – when not in use and store them safely away.
- Give your heater some space – leave at least 3 feet between the heater and anything.
- Go new in the nursery – check all things painted to make sure they were painted with lead-free paint.
- Cool your jets – set water heater below 120° F to avoid potential burns and to save energy.
- Put away medications – place them in a cabinet with a child safety lock.

Motor Vehicle Safety

- Wear safety belts
- Avoid distractions – don't text, email, put on makeup, change the radio, etc. while driving.
- Keep infants and children safe – always use the proper seat for children.
- Keep teens safe – teach your teen the proper way to drive by being the best role model.
- Keep seniors safe – know what possible medication side effects there are in regards to driving and help educate the seniors on any law changes.
- Be aware of your surroundings – check for any people around your car before walking up to it or getting in, once in your car lock the doors, and check again to make sure no one is behind the car before backing up.
- Don't drive impaired – call a friend or designate someone in the group to drive you home and don't let your friends drive drunk.
- Be a defensive driver – obey the speed limits, stop when the light turns yellow, and follow safe driving techniques.

- Keep the vehicle well-maintained – have your vehicle serviced regularly, which includes oil changes, checking the wiper blades, and filling the spare tire with air.

Health Safety

- Get first aid, CPR, and AED trained – you never know when you will need it.
- Visit the dentist – oral health contributes to your overall health
- Visit the doctor – annual exams help keep you healthy and help you stay on top of your health.
- Understand how to use and dispose of your medications – by disposing of your medications properly, you will help reduce the chance of prescription abuse.
- Prevent unintentional medication overdose – never take more than is prescribed
- Protect against poisoning – children are at the greatest risk of poisoning from prescription medications, cleaning products, and personal care products.
- Prevent falls – maintain a clutter-free and safe home environment.
- Practice food safety – wash your hands, cook food to the appropriate temperatures, properly wash cutting boards and utensils.

I encourage you to be safe each day!

For more information, contact the Wabaunsee County Extension Office at 785-765-3821 or email Bernadette Trieb, btrieb@ksu.edu.