

## Healthy Aging: Security Health Plan

As we age, there are more barriers to staying healthy and often fewer resources. More than 20 percent of Security Health Plan members are Medicare members, so building resources to support healthy aging is integral to the plan's mission.

### FALL PREVENTION

Each year, more than one-third of people age 65 or older fall. Even just the fear of falling can be a barrier to an active, independent life. Security Health Plan partnered with the Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (WIHA) in 2016 to offer Stepping On, a seven-week program that reduces falls by 50 percent. The free classes are open to all community members and are led by a health professional, peer leader and guest experts. Stepping On integrates balance and strength training with information on vision, medications, fall hazards and walking aids. The classes also provide opportunities to practice on different surfaces (e.g., carpet, hardwood floor, incline ramps), as surfaces differ in their fall potential. Security Health Plan care managers, home visit nurses, and Marshfield Clinic providers refer patients to the program. It is also advertised online, through direct mailings and the Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) of Wisconsin.



Let's Talk about Medicines helps seniors better understand prescription drug labels.

### HEALTHY AGING GRANTS

In 2016, Security Health Plan gave local organizations nearly \$100,000 in Healthy Aging Grants to help older adults overcome chronic disease, falls, lack of exercise and difficulty understanding drug labels. In the town of Wautoma,

Wisconsin, more exercise opportunities ranked as the community's second-highest need. The ADRC uses funding from a Security Healthy Aging Grant to offer a free Tai Chi class, a low-impact physical activity proven to prevent falls by teaching balance, stability and flexibility.

A Healthy Aging Grant is also helping the Bayfield County Department of Human Services make available Living Well with Chronic Conditions, a six-week workshop for older adults with one or more chronic condition. Participants gain the knowledge and confidence to lead active and fulfilling lives while managing their conditions. Workshops cover a range of topics, including coping with pain, managing stress, developing food label literacy and communicating with health care providers. Advance care planning information for patients and their caregivers is also offered post-session. Participant-reported outcomes include improved general health, fewer days of hospitalization and fewer outpatient health care visits.

### LET'S TALK ABOUT MEDICINES

Understanding drug labels prevents improper dosing, which can have "serious health consequences, including adverse drug events," according to Wisconsin Health Literacy (WHL). WHL identifies seniors as having an increased risk of misusing their medications over other age groups. Since 2015, Security Health Plan has supported Let's Talk About Medicines, a series of 25 educational workshops presented by WHL to help adults age 50 and older safely and effectively use their medications. Before the 2016 workshop, only 25 percent of participants knew when they should take their medication, and only 41 percent could identify the parts of a prescription label. After the workshops, participants' medication timing and label literacy rates rose to 56 and 58 percent, respectively. 🍊

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