‘Tis the season for fall prevention

If you have fallen lately, you are not alone. More than 11 million people over the age of 65 fall every year – that’s one of every three senior citizens. Falls can be a serious problem – they are a major cause of injury, restricted mobility, and loss of independence.

The most important step you can take to prevent falls is to maintain as much strength and coordination as possible by following your doctor’s instructions on taking your medications, eating properly, and exercising. The next step is to look around your home for hazards that could lead to a fall, and correct them. Here are some suggestions for patient fall prevention and for creating a safer home environment:

- Rooms, hallways, and staircases should be well lit; consider nightlights or dimmed lights for night time
- Keep rooms and hallways free of clutter by removing boxes, newspapers, electrical cords and phone cords from walkways
- Wear comfortable shoes with nonskid soles
- Use a bath chair or stool in the shower and always use safety hand rails when getting in or out
- Keep an eye out for hazards that you can trip on or for flimsy hand rails/banisters and loose boards

Adapted from http://www.hiprotector.com/prevention.html

Medicare enrollment changes— By Adrienne Noble, Information and Referral Specialist

Please note: Medicare enrollment dates have changed. The dates are no longer November 15 through December 31. This year the dates are October 15 through December 7 for a January 1, 2012 start date.

- There are basically four phases of coverage for Medicare part D. These four phases are the Deductible, the Initial Coverage Period, the Coverage Gap, and the Catastrophic Benefit Period
- Deductibles for Part D Drug plans will be increased from $310 to $320. This reflects a $10 increase from 2011 and is the amount which must be spent if your 2012 drug plan has a deductible before the Initial Coverage Period begins. During the Initial Coverage Period, the costs of the covered drugs are shared 25 percent by the plan member while the plan pays 75 percent of the drug costs. The member’s true out of pocket expense during the Initial Coverage Period is up to $652.50, with the plan paying $1,957.50. The total amount spent by the member and the plan during the Initial Coverage Period is $2,610
- The Coverage Gap or the ‘donut hole’ begins when the deductible and the initial coverage limit reaches $2,930. During this Gap period the member will pay 86 percent for plan-covered generic drugs and 50 percent for the plan-covered brand drugs. The total amount spent for the deductible, the Initial Coverage Period and during the Coverage Gap will total $6,657.50 before reaching the Catastrophic Benefit Coverage Period. During the Catastrophic Benefit period, there are reduced co-pays for the prescriptions: $2.60 for generic medications and $6.50 for brand name drugs

For additional information about Medicare changes, contact Georgia Cares at 1 (800) 669-8387.
Grandparents to the rescue! — By Pat Milhous, Nutrition Services Coordinator

Are you a caregiver for a young child? If you have this challenge, you can make a difference in their health. How?

- Eat fruits and vegetables as snacks. Let your child see that you like to munch on raw vegetables
- Try new foods yourself. Describe its taste, texture, and smell
- Offer one new food at a time. Serve something your child likes along with the new food. Offer new foods at the beginning of a meal when your child is very hungry. Avoid lecturing or forcing your child to eat
- Go shopping together. Grocery shopping can teach your child about food and nutrition
- Get creative in the kitchen. Cut food into fun and easy shapes with cookie cutters. Name a dish after your child. Serve “Janie’s Salad” or “Jackie’s Sweet Potatoes” for dinner. Encourage your child to invent new snacks

- Offer the same foods for everyone. Don’t be a ‘short-order cook’ by making different dishes to please children. It’s easier to plan meals if everyone eats the same foods
- Reward with attention, not food. Show your love with hugs and kisses. Choose not to offer sweets as rewards as it lets your child believe these foods are better than other foods
- Encourage physical activity. Make physical activity fun and include yourself. Walk, run, and play with your grandchild – instead of sitting on the sidelines. Set an example by being physically active and using safety gear, like bike helmets

Adapted from “Chef Charles Says” October 2011, Iowa Nutrition Network.

Alzheimer’s caregiver wordfind — By Julie Lucas, Office Assistant to Health Services

Family caregivers serve on the front line in caring for our nation’s growing number of people with Alzheimer’s disease. If you or someone you know is serving as a family caregiver for a loved one who has Alzheimer’s or a related condition, it’s so important to take advantage of the support that is available. This puzzle contains 19 words all having to do with Alzheimer’s care.

CARE MANAGER
COUNSELING
EDUCATION
FAMILY
FRIENDS
HEALTH
HOME CARE
INFORMATION
LONG-TERM CARE

LOVE
MEAL DELIVERY
MEMORY CARE
PHYSICIAN
REFERRAL
RESpite
SENIOR SERVICES
STRESS MANAGE
SUPPORT GROUP

F E Y E N O I T A C U D E L S
S T R E S S M A N A G E M E N
I E E A E I X R H Q E S N D P
N N V F C A D K E R R I W H H
F I I A I M N E A S O U O Y
O L L M E F R C F R P M Q T S
R P E I O D Y E S R E I P L I
M L D L P R K E T C I C T A C
A E L Y O Q R Q A G J E M E I
T H A M Z V W R K S N P N H A
I Y E F I H E G W Y N O H D N
O M M C L A R R E F E R L V S
N Y E P U O R G T R O P P U S
Z S A C O U N S E L I N G S G
R E G A N A M E R A C L O V E

Gwinnett County Senior Center Locations

**Buford**
2755 Sawnee Avenue
Buford, GA 30518
(770) 614-2527

**Lawrenceville**
Rhodes-Jordan Park
225 Benson Street
Lawrenceville, GA 30046
(770) 822-5180

**Norcross**
5030 Georgia Belle Court
Norcross, GA 30093
(770) 638-5683