



NORTH CAROLINA
BAPTIST AGING MINISTRY
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Help for the Journey

The Newsletter for North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry

NCBAM is a dynamic Christian resource for the aging and their families. It is Christ-centered and seeks to treat the aging with dignity and respect enabling individuals to maintain independence and a quality life. NCBAM is a ministry of Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, Michael C. Blackwell, President.

A Heavenly Helping Hand

By Carol Layton

For adults over 65, the most dangerous place in America is their own bathroom. Every 2.3 seconds an aging adult falls – and it's usually near a tub or toilet. The consequences are often traumatic and debilitating.

North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry (NCBAM) Director Sandy Gregory explains, "When an aging adult experiences a fall, it often means an end to independence. We see fall prevention tools like grab bars and handrails as a practical way to help aging adults."

NCBAM Regional Director Wendy Minton Edwards saw the need in Eastern North Carolina to assist with purchasing and installing grab bars. "The Council on Aging in Pitt County receives some funding to help the aging with grab bars, but it's not nearly enough to meet the need. Many Pitt County aging are on waiting lists."

Edwards provided samples of grab bars to North Carolina Baptist churches in the Greenville area as well as information on prices and buying options. Edwards also contacted Phil Frady, the director of missions



Director of Missions Phil Frady alerts churches and pastors in South Roanoke Association of the grab bar drive to help the aging in their communities. NCBAM works closely with directors of missions to connect Baptists to needs.

for the South Roanoke Baptist Association. He contacted pastors, churches and mission leaders who responded to the need.

Christal Curran at the Council on Aging in Pitt County was happy to furnish more grab bars to those on waiting lists. "We are very grateful for the help and support that Wendy and NCBAM provided."

Edwards sees this initial grab bar drive as just the beginning. "The need for grab bars is huge, and their usefulness for preventing falls is great. Each one that is donated and installed has the potential to prevent untold suffering and save tens of thousands

of dollars in medical costs. Our efforts in Pitt County laid the groundwork by spreading awareness. Donating grab bars or providing for their installation is a way for churches to designate VBS or missions group offerings."

NCBAM is poised to tackle one of the greatest risks to senior health – falling. You can make a difference, too! Contact your local senior center or call NCBAM at 1-877-506-2226 to see how you can help keep aging adults on their feet.

You have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. – Psalm 116:8

Writer is the time to take stock and plan for a year filled with opportunity and hope!

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PHOTO: NCBAM Care Support Assistant Joyce Nance and call center volunteer Phyllis Burgess provide personal assistance daily through NCBAM's Call Center. The duo work with aging adults and their families.



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An Apple A Day Is Good Advice

By Dr. Sandy Gregory

"An apple a day helps keep the doctor away" dates back to an 1866 edition of *Notes and Queries*. And apples do promote good health. Apples contain vitamin C which aids the immune system and phenols which reduce cholesterol. Eating an apple helps to reduce tooth decay. Studies have also shown that the quercetin found in apples protect brain cells against neuro-degenerative disorders.

Another way of promoting good health is an annual "wellness check-up." Medicare recipients can now receive a free annual "wellness check" from a doctor or health care provider. The check-up offers a basic physical exam and prevention services such as cancer and diabetes screening.

NCBAM helps aging adults stay in their homes longer. Preventive care helps. Early detection and treatment of illnesses and diseases makes a difference.



Dr. Gregory is a native of Statesville. His pride and joy are his three teenage sons.

Reflect with me...

Baby, It's Warm Inside!

By Wendy Minton Edwards

As I peek out the window this morning, I am greeted with a blanket of white. Yes, the snow is falling and it's cold outside. The trees are bare and the limbs are drooping. I see blinking lights down the way indicating that somewhere close by someone is without power. Many would not see this as a good day.

As I go about my morning routine, I am reminded of how thankful I am that outward conditions do not control my inward condition. 2 Cor. 4:16 (NIV) makes that clear. **"Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day."**

Thanks be to God, it may be

cold outside, but it's warm inside.

External views might bring despair and desperation, but inwardly God always is about restoration, hope and new life. I'm reminded of the old television commercial that all of us, especially women, remember, "You're not getting older; you're getting better."

How true it is. Our bodies generally are not getting better as we age, but Holy Scripture assures us that we are "getting better." We're getting better because we've had more time to surrender our inner selves to the good work of our great God. And the more God works within you and me, the better we become.

Take joy, my friends, because baby, it's warm inside!



Dr. Wendy Minton Edwards lives in Spring Hope with her husband of 20 years, Arnold Ray.

Get involved and help an aging adult.

There is an immediate and urgent need for transportation assistance and friendly visit/respite care providers.

Visit www.ncbam.org/involved or call 877-50 NCBAM.

12-Month Guide Helps Aging Adults

Call 1-877-506-2226 to order this helpful guide with suggestions on how you can minister to aging adults!



Risk Prevention Is Essential

By Carol Layton

One in three adults over age 65 fall each year in the United States. Most are performing an everyday activity. For many, the act of stepping out of a nice hot shower or reaching for a special serving dish becomes their last simple everyday activity – and often signals a devastating loss of independence.

Falls are the leading cause of death and disability in adults over 65. The most common serious injuries are those to the head, and fractures to the wrist, spine and hip – consequences that often lead to spiraling debilitation and even death. Only 25% of hip fracture patients make a full recovery. Forty percent will enter nursing homes. Half will be dependant upon a cane or a walker. And 20% will die within one year.

The cost to individuals and families is high. When aging adults lose independence, families struggle to find resources to meet new challenges. The monetary cost is also high; treatment from falls and resulting complications costs more than \$20 billion each year in the U.S.

The good news is that many falls are preventable. The highest risk factors in the home are slip-



NCBAM Director Sandy Gregory and Eastern Region Director Wendy Minton Edwards preview various grab bars available for in-home use. NCBAM's mission focuses on helping aging adults maintain independence. The group strives to educate aging adults and their families about the benefits of risk prevention.

pery surfaces, poor lighting, improper footwear, and cluttered pathways. Here are specific ways to reduce the risk of falling:

- Have an annual physical and eye examination; maintain a healthy diet and safely exercise to improve strength, balance and coordination.
- Keep stairs well-lit, free of clutter, and covered with non-slip treads. Have sturdy handrails on both sides.
- Bathrooms should have night-lights, non-skid rugs, grab bars in the tub or shower and toilet areas, and rubber mats on the tub or shower floor.
- Arrange kitchen storage at counter level to avoid climbing or

reaching. Clean spills immediately and don't wax floors. Step stools should have handrails and be stable.

- Remove low tables, foot stools, and electric or telephone cords from living areas.
- Bedrooms should have night-lights and be free of throw rugs or clutter. Beds should be of normal height. Sit for a moment before standing.
- Wear low-heeled shoes with rubber soles when inside or out. Avoid slippers.

For more information, visit:
www.learnNOTtofall.com
www.orthoinfo.org/falls
www.ncoa.org/improving-health/falls-prevention