Safe for Elders 2019

The Nlaka’pamux Nation

For information about this initiative and to access resources, go to www.safeforelders.com.
Our Elders are our most precious resource.

The Nlaka’pamux Nation Tribal Council is dedicated to keeping our Elders safe and ensuring they are able to remain within their homes and their communities for as long as possible. This calendar illustrates the many ways Elders can avoid falls and injury and, in doing so, to continue doing the many things that bring them pleasure.

Acknowledgements

Safe for Elders, Safe for All is an initiative supported by the Nlaka’pamux Nation Tribal Council, Fraser Thompson Indian Services Society, Fraser and Interior Health Authorities, and 5 First Nation communities within the Fraser Canyon. With funding from the Interior Health Authority, community representatives have developed a broad range of falls and injury prevention resources to support Elders which include a calendar, a brochure, posters, a BINGO game, a card game, and a list of resources. And that’s not all, more resources are ‘in the works.’

We would like to thank the Nlaka’pamux Tribal Council for so generously providing us with the Nlaka’pamux orthography for the calendar.

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Make your home safer

Is clutter putting you at risk?
If you have clutter on your floors or stairs, it can make it more difficult to stay on your feet. Make sure there are no cords, scatter rugs, pet toys or even pets in your path.

Are your stairs safe?
Safe stairs are well-lit with a light switch at the top and bottom of the stairs, handrails on both sides of the stairway, and an anti-slip finish. Contrast stripes are a great idea too.

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Stay active

Are you exercising?
The most important thing you can do to prevent falls is to stay strong. Try to increase your activity levels so you get a little exercise each day. Walking, fishing, gardening, tai chi – whatever you enjoy. Use a walking aid to help you if you need it. Remember, no plunking!

If you need ideas about what kinds of exercises you can safely do at home, visit us online at www.safeforelders.com.

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Fishing the River
Be careful when walking or working on uneven surfaces. Wear comfortable, sturdy shoes that grip the ground. Be sure you are steady on your feet and aren't off balance. Make sure friends and family know where you are and when you expect to return.
Medication review

Are you taking care of your health?
For many, Spring is a time of harvesting traditional medicines. It is important to properly manage your health issues.

Always take your prescription medications as directed, and remember that some medications can cause dizziness. Avoid mixing alcohol with prescription medications.

If you are taking more than 2 medications, ask your pharmacist to review them for you.

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Have your vision checked

When was the last time you had your eyes checked?
Vision is an important part of balance. Good vision helps to prevent falls. If you are over the age of 65, you should have your vision checked every year, or more frequently if your doctor recommends it. If it has been more than a year since you had your vision checked, make an appointment this month!

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Keep your bones strong.

Have you broken a bone from a fall?

Osteoporosis is a disease that causes bones to break more easily. Most bone breaks happen while lifting something, twisting, tripping, slipping or falling. If you have broken a bone after the age of 50, talk to your health care provider about testing for osteoporosis.

Vitamin D and calcium help to keep your bones strong. Calcium is in salmon, spinach, stinging nettle, plantains and sesame seeds. Silica (for bone health) is in celery, cucumber, stinging nettle, wild asparagus and horse tail. Vitamin D is in salmon, egg yolks and sunshine. You may also want to talk to your doctor about supplements.

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**Blackcap (mEchaqu) or Sockeye (shwuhA.ash)**

**Preserve your salmon, preserve your health.**

With the summer season in full swing, activity increases and so can the risk of falls.

Be extra careful when working in the kitchen, carrying knives or hot pans. Mop up spills immediately. Enjoy working with others, but stay focused on the task you are working on. If people wish to socialize, invite them to do so away from the kitchen work area.

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Huckleberry (TSuiTSAla)

Collect from nature’s bounty.
Harvesting huckleberries is a favorite summer activity for many First Nations people.

Fresh air, spending time in nature, bending and stretching, walking, sharing with family: all add to a sense of wellness.

Be sure to pick huckleberries in areas where you have firm footing and be careful not to reach so far that you lose your balance. You don’t want to spill any of those wonderful berries!

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Cedar basket making

Traditional practices.
Pulling strips of cedar bark for weaving can be hard work. When weaving, assemble your materials so they are within arm’s reach.
Teach youngsters to help with this process as they can be very helpful. They can assist you when days are short and surfaces are uneven, which can increase the chances of a fall.

For information about this initiative and to access resources, go to www.safe4elders.com.
Pine mushrooms (KE-mAsh)

Autumn is a time to harvest.
Picking mushrooms can be a good form of exercise and can provide fresh produce for you and your family. Be careful when carrying weight on uneven, sometimes slippery surfaces. Bring a walking stick to help steady your step. Plan to be home well before sunset so there is enough light for you to find your way. Invite others to join you, for your own safety and to provide you with company.

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Tracking deer

Spend time outdoors.
Extended physical outdoor activity strengthens muscles, improves heart health, and can increase your levels of vitamin D. Remember to bring someone with you and to let relatives know where you are headed and when you expect to return.

Stay safe. Bring a flashlight, food, and a whistle or cellphone in case you get disoriented. A fall outdoors can be life threatening. Learn about first aid, such as making a splint from a branch and cloth.

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Winter is a time to gather and share. As it gets colder outdoors and life moves indoors, low light, smoky conditions, and stacked firewood all can increase the risk of falling.

Keep floors swept and uncluttered, and firewood stacked neatly in low piles near your door. Remember it is important to see where you are going, so keep your glasses handy at all times.

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