

Treatment Interventions/Recommendations

Medical Problems – Treat problems such as cardiac complications appropriately with medication, referral for surgical procedures, diet, and exercise.

Medication Management – Ensure that all medications are necessary. Review proper use and dosage with your patients. Encourage the use of medication organizers.

Cognitive Deficits – Treat cognitive deficits with medications as appropriate. Encourage exercise. Meet with caregivers or family to open dialogue on managing cognitive impairment and environmental safety. Refer your patients to speech therapy or occupational therapy for a cognitive evaluation and intervention strategies.

Vision – Refer patients to ophthalmologist for regular vision checks. Changing eye glass prescription or cataract surgery may be a simple way to prevent falls. Recommend well light environments. Encourage the use of sunglasses with UV protection and artificial tears if needed. Remind patients to keep their glasses clean.

Foot Care – Refer your patient to a podiatrist if significant foot deformity, sensory impairment, or pain is present. Discourage use of high heels or soft shoes for older people. Recommend physical therapy if reduced foot strength, mobility, and foot pain is present.

Strength, Balance and Gait – Refer to physical therapy if significant strength, balance impairments, or gait deficits are present.

Balance – Refer to a vestibular certified therapist for management of BPPV and inner ear deficiencies.

Exercise – Encourage regular exercise such as Tai Chi or a group exercise program. Most research supports an exercise program that is at least 10 to 12 weeks in length and incorporates strengthening and balance exercises.

Neuropathy – Manage neuropathy with proper medication, dietary needs (B12 deficiency), proper footwear, and exercise/physical therapy.

Home Safety – Discuss your patient's home situation and recommend railings on all steps, grab bars in the tub/shower, and non-skid mats or surface in the tub or shower. Put bells on household pets such as cats and dogs. Remove clutter that blocks walkways or stairways.

Assistive Devices – Encourage your patient to use the proper assistive device. Refer your patient to a physical therapist for consultation on the proper device when appropriate.