Self-Help Program Aims To Keep Seniors On Their Feet

For Immediate Release

(RICHMOND, B.C., March 18, 2008) - One in every three Canadians over 65 are just a step away from falling, and that slip, trip or stumble often has serious and costly consequences. Older Canadians are nine times more likely to suffer an injury from a fall leading to hospitalization and even death. That is why the B.C. Chiropractic Association is participating in Best Foot Forward, a public education program aimed at preventing falls in seniors. The program follows a Public Health Agency of Canada report detailing the debilitating and even deadly consequences of seniors' falls, and the prevention and awareness information from the BC Ministry of Health.

"Falling among older Canadians is a serious public health concern," says Dr. Heather McLeod DC, president, BC Chiropractic Association. "More than 90 per cent of all hip fractures in seniors are caused by a fall, and one-fifth of those seniors will die within a year of the fracture."

"We want to keep older Canadians on their feet and enjoying their independence as long as possible," says Dr. McLeod. "A fall is far more likely to mean surgery, lengthy rehabilitation and restricted activities for an older Canadian than for a younger one. It's a domino effect that can lead to isolation and inactivity. That's something we want to help prevent."

“Best Foot Forward offers practical advice on many aspects of prevention that older Canadians can do easily," says Dr. Brian Gleberzon, DC, who acted as a consultant on the national Report on Seniors' Falls in Canada and who helped develop the program. "Preventing a fall can be as simple as changing your footwear, taking off your reading glasses before walking to the next room or removing slippery scatter mats."

A self-assessment quiz and illustrated prevention tip sheets covering household hazards, health risks, strength and balance, and safety-conscious behaviour can be obtained at no charge from the BC Chiropractic Association, info@bcchiro.com or downloaded from the Canadian Chiropractic Association website at www.ccachiro.org. Prevention presentations to groups can also be arranged by calling the BC Chiropractic Association at 604-270-1332 or toll free 1-866-256-1474.

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Best Foot Forward marshals the expertise of the chiropractic profession to bring practical prevention advice to older Canadians across the country," says Dr. McLeod. "Chiropractic doctors are experts in spine and related health conditions, and each family chiropractor is in an excellent position to bring the prevention message to their patient and community."

"The message we want to get across is - don't let a fall get you down. Slips, trips and stumbles are preventable," concludes Dr. Gleberzon.

Note: All statistics are from the Public Health Agency of Canada Report on Seniors' Falls in Canada.

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