Medications Linked to Falls

Although many medication classes have been linked to falls, the evidence is strongest for a few drug categories. Medication management can reduce interactions and side effects that may lead to falls.

Medication management means:

■ Eliminating medications if there is no active indication
■ Reducing doses of necessary medications (e.g., antihypertensives) to the lowest effective dose
■ Avoiding prescribing medications for an older person where the risk from side effects outweighs the benefit (e.g., skeletal muscle relaxants)

The MOST important intervention is to reduce or eliminate:

■ Psychoactive drugs, especially any benzodiazepines
■ Any medications that have anticholinergic side effects
■ Sedating OTCs, specifically Tylenol PM (which contains Benadryl) and Benadryl

For more information about geriatric medication management, go to the American Society of Consultant Pharmacists website at: www.ascp.com