For more than 25 years, I practiced as a board-certified internal medicine physician. Throughout the years, I not only helped my patients through sicknesses but I spent time informing them on the importance of prevention. From each other, we learned about taking a proactive approach to health. In my current role as the chief medical officer at the Trust, I believe it’s important to share my clinical expertise for us to continue learning and benefiting from each other.

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IMPORTANT:
Keep communication open with your doctor. Taking steps to create a safe living environment and making your doctor aware of falls can help you live a safer life.

FALL PREVENTION

One in four Americans aged 65 or older experience a fall each year according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Falls can threaten your health and independence. Understanding risk factors can help you avoid immediate and long-term consequences and complications of falling.

Stay on Top of Your Health
Taking actions toward a healthier you will help decrease the chances of a fall in your future.
• Engage in regular exercise to strengthen muscles and increase stability.
• Have vision and hearing exams regularly (or if you notice a change).
• Review any medications that may cause dizziness or drowsiness with your doctor.

Create a Safe Living Environment
Living in a safe, clutter-free environment becomes more important as you get older. A lack of organization and preparation can increase the chances of an accident occurring.

Lighting
Have light switches located at the top and bottom of staircases, and adequately installed throughout your home.

Clutter
Organize and clear clutter from your home, particularly on the floor and in walkways.

Flooring
Make sure all rugs are entirely flat and secured with non-skid pads.

Handrails/Grab Bars
Install handrails on all stairwells and grab bars near toilets and bathtubs.

PREVENTIVE SERVICES

Vaccinations
- Flu
- Pneumonia
- Shingles

Preventive Screenings
- Annual Wellness / Primary Care Office Visit
- Breast Cancer
- Cardiovascular Disease
- Colorectal Cancer
- High Blood Pressure
- Diabetes
- Dental / Oral Health Exam
- Vision Exam

Diabetes-Related Screenings
- Testing, including a review of HbA1c
- Eye Exam
- Annual Flu and Pneumonia Shot
  It is especially important for individuals with diabetes to have these shots

screenings and struggled with arthritis and weight gain, which ultimately affected her ability to get around. During our visit, we addressed her medications and set goals for her to be more active.

A few months following our initial visit, she came back for a checkup, and to my delight, she had improved mobility and reclaimed her sense of independence. She explained that her family had expressed concern for her well-being and hoped she would consider moving into a nursing home. Her desire to remain close to her family and friends triggered her to begin monitoring her diet more closely, slowly increasing physical activity, and keeping her appointments for preventive screenings. She took a proactive approach to her health, rather than looking for a “magic” pill! This experience led to a positive patient outcome, and for me, emphasized how much of our health can truly lie in our own hands.

I share this to shine a light on the importance of taking steps to improve your health by being proactive. The year is still fresh, and it’s a great time to make a plan, set goals that you can achieve and focus on your health improvement. Individual and specific needs will vary, but there are things you can do now that will help you lead a healthier life. In fact, throughout the year many of you will receive targeted health reminders and information from the Trust and your medical plan carrier, on topics like the ones listed to the left. Review the preventive services with your physician to see what may be most appropriate for you.

Wishing you the best in health,
Dr. Gina Buccalo
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TRUST CONNECT
Stay in tune with your health & wellness

HEALTHY LIVING: PREVENTION & BEING PROACTIVE

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