

June is National Safety Month: Focus on Personal Safety for Seniors



June is National Safety Month. Safety issues and concerns abound: poisons, fire, weather, automobile/driver, medications, falls, etc. This year our focus is **Personal Safety for Seniors**.

As people get older, they may become more fearful of becoming targets of crime. According to one study, two-thirds of seniors believe they will eventually become victims of crime; almost half of those 75+ are afraid to leave their homes after dark. About one-third say their fear has contributed to them feeling lonely and isolated. They may feel more vulnerable due to a physical disability or weakened condition, for example. They may feel uneasy when they live alone and frequently do errands/shopping/traveling on their own.

While seniors shouldn't stop doing their daily activities, being aware of how they may be targeted—and how to prevent becoming targeted—will help them be more confident in their own independence.

Seniors can take common-sense measures to protect themselves:

- Always be alert and aware of your surroundings. Make note of what is happening around you
- Take the necessary steps to protect yourself, your car, your home, your finances
 - Become less trusting—strangers aren't the only ones who may prey on you; many elders have been targeted by their own family and friends
 - Report any suspicious activities or people you encounter to the local police

Resources:

- National Safety Council, www.nsc.org, 800- 621-7615
- Burlington and Mercer County Offices on Aging: 1-877-222-373