

STEVE FRANKS
DIRECTOR
OC COMMUNITY RESOURCES

RYAN DRABEK
DIRECTOR
OC ANIMAL CARE

KAREN ROPER
DIRECTOR
OC COMMUNITY SERVICES

MARK DENNY
DIRECTOR
OC PARKS

HELEN FRIED
COUNTY LIBRARIAN
OC PUBLIC LIBRARIES

October 2011

Are You Being Safe Out in the Dark?

By: Erin Ulibarri, MPH

Now that Fall has begun, the days are getting shorter and the nights longer. Cooler, damper weather is also settling in. Walking is a wonderful way to get daily physical activity, but there are precautions an older adult should consider.

There are many things to think about if you are walking outside after sunset:

- **Fall hazards:** Walking in unfamiliar, dark places can lead to a fall. 1 in 3 older adults fall each year and 1/3 of those falls occur out in the community.
- **Crime:** People over 65 are much less likely than the rest of the population to be a victim of a crime, but it can happen. Older adults are most likely to be the victim of a theft (purses, wallets, property) close to their home.
- **Medical Emergencies:** Once the sun goes down, the temperature can drop quite a bit, especially if you live close to the coast. Hypothermia can set in quickly if an older adult is not dressed warmly and is outside for a while.

Safety Tips

- Walk in pairs or groups. There is safety in numbers.
- Watch where you are walking. Pay attention when using stairs or walking in unfamiliar places.
- Walk in brightly lit areas. Call **1-800-510-2020** for a free keychain flashlight.
- Keep purses close to the body and zipped and wallets in front pockets. Only carry what you really need at the time.
- Program "ICE" (In Case of Emergency) into your cell phone contact list.
- Walk with confidence.
- Make eye contact with people you come in contact with. This will deter any would-be thief.
- Carry a jacket or sweater in case the temperature drops.

The Office on Aging Information and Assistance Specialists can be reached at **1-800-510-2020** or **1-714-567-7500**. They can assist with information on programs and services for older adults in Orange County, including in-home assistance, transportation, health education, caregiver support, counseling, residential facilities, meal programs, health insurance, services for the disabled, ethnic services and much more.



Advocacy. Action. Answers on Aging.

1300 SOUTH GRAND, BLDG. B
SANTA ANA, CA 92705
PHONE: 714.567.7500
FAX: 714.567.5021

