

Episode 178 Transcript : How Good Is Your Tread?

00:00:00:57 - 00:00:26:50

Karen Brown

Hi, everyone, and welcome to episode 178 for those of you who have watched this show for a while, you know that I've worked in the fall and injury prevention space for almost 30 years. And so as we have just experienced our first big snowfall slips and falls on wintry surfaces are something that I need to bring forward

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Karen Brown

again and make sure you're paying attention to it because it's going to happen. We're just at the beginning of winter, and you need to take steps to protect yourself. Kind of doesn't even matter what age you are, you know, if you don't have the right tread on your boots when you're outside or those lovely fuzzy slippers that

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Karen Brown

you've loved forever inside. You're at risk for slipping and falling slips and falls on ice in Canada, result in something like 67,000 visits to the ER every year, and the injuries range from bruising all the way through to death.

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Karen Brown

Because that can happen if you fall backward and whack your head. It can happen in between, there are broken bones, hip fractures, of course. Chief among them, it's a really big deal and we need to pay attention to it.

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Karen Brown

Marketplace, which is a production of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, just recently did a program on six different boot brands, and they were tested at the Kite Lab at the Toronto Rehab Institute. It was a really interesting program. Of course, we did an article about it on theoldish.com.

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Karen Brown

You can go to that article, and at the bottom embedded is the YouTube video of the Marketplace segment, and you can watch that there. It's about 19 minutes long. Really worthwhile video to spend a little bit of time watching and wrapping your head around the conditions that can result in slips and falls and really how to prevent

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Karen Brown

it. The EMS commander that was interviewed for that segment called slips on ice preventable injuries. Kind of have to agree with him. I have to tell you, I kind of agree with him. You know, there are things that can be done to mitigate the potential.

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Karen Brown

And we need to do more to protect ourselves. We'll get into some data about that in a little bit. You know, interestingly, one of the boots that was tested, the UGG boots market themselves as the boot for the harshest winter weather.

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Karen Brown

But they don't recommend wearing them to walk on ice. The harshest winter weather, but don't walk on. On ice. Really? You know, you need to make very sure of the marketing claims that are being made. Protect yourself that way as well.

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Karen Brown

There was a winner in the boot category. Yeah, there was. And. It is a boot made by Wind River. The boot is called the Wind River Backwoods Waterproof, Hyper Dri 3 Hiking Boot. Big name, I believe it's made by Marks, which is owned by a Canadian Tire, so you should be able to find that boot.

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Karen Brown

These boots were tested on a 15 degree slope up and a 14 degree slope down the Toronto Rehab Institute has a really cool lab. It has a place that ice can be simulated. Melting ice, hard frozen ice and everything in between and the ramp.

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Karen Brown

Goes up and down. On a on an angle so that they can simulate these slopes and test things to see how well people can walk up a slope with these boots on and down just as well. And they explain what the researchers are looking for.

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Karen Brown

Really, really interesting. Go watch that program. So, some of these boots are not winners. I would like you all to go and look in your closet. At your boots, your shoes and your slippers, turn them over. Look at the tread.

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Karen Brown

If they're shiny and slick. Throw them out. They are not going to do you any favors. If they've got some worn tread. And you can't afford to replace them. Please do that. Whether it's your shoes or your boots, because I know depending on the weather and depending on how the sidewalks and roads are shoveled, it can be

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Karen Brown

just as easy to slip on a warm pair of shoes to go to the mailbox or to wherever. But you need to make sure that the Tread will support you because you don't know where you might encounter a little bit of black ice.

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Karen Brown

Sometimes even on days where the temperature will be above zero Celsius. first thing in the morning, there can be some ice on stair steps that you don't see. It's very easy to slip on that and you need that tread.

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Karen Brown

So check on that. And, you know, gift giving season is coming. So check that tread and make sure that you've got adequate in your boots as well. And maybe check out these wind river boots. I think they're really good.

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Karen Brown

You know, falls are the number one cause of injury related deaths and hospitalization and E.R. visits for older adults in Canada. They can really happen at any age, but the data shows us that older adults are particularly susceptible to this.

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Karen Brown

It costs \$5.6 billion. That's billion with a B, and that number is from 2018. So by now, in 2021, I'm sure the cost has increased. The statistics around older adults who fall are really bone chilling. 25% of people who get a hip fracture,

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Karen Brown

from any occurrence, and remember, hip fractures happened as a result of falls. They can also happen as a result of osteoporosis, where you can be standing in one spot. You can turn your upper body, which fractures the hip and you fall after that.

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Karen Brown

So falls are not necessarily a result of slipping on something or losing your footing. If you have osteoporosis, if you've been diagnosed with osteoporosis, if they can happen in other ways as well. So there are mitigations for that.

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Karen Brown

Also, however, 25% of people who sustain a hip injury will lose mobility and independence. They will need help with assistive tasks. So I'm thinking of things like walking, bathing, eating, dressing. You will need help. The more bone chilling statistic is that 20% of people who sustain a hip fracture will die in the first year.

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Karen Brown

Men more than women, but 20%. So, you know, it's ever so important to mitigate all of this stuff, 50% of falls happen in the home. Inside your house. Now, those who have been watching know that I also have certifications in home modification, and one of the things that I talk about regularly is fall proofing your home, picking

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Karen Brown

up those throw rugs, tucking away the cords, making sure your animals are trained to watch out for you, making sure that you've got railings on both sides of stair steps inside and outside. I mean, there are so many things that you can do to mitigate falls in the home, but 50% of them happen in the home.

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Karen Brown

That's a pretty big number. 60% of falls happen as a result of loss of balance and coordination. 60%. What can you do to mitigate that? Exercise and do exercises that focus on balance and coordination. Things like Tai Chi, Yoga.

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Karen Brown

I hired a trainer some months ago to devise a routine for me and highlight some of the concerns that I had. one of them was balance because I am getting older. Balance is going to come into play, so I have exercises in my routine that focus on balance.

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Karen Brown

You need to make sure that if you cannot mitigate balance quickly enough that you have some kind of a mobility advice device, do not be too proud to get a cane. If that's what you need. Don't. And walking outdoors.

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Karen Brown

Those Nordic walking poles are the bomb. They can really help you. So many people have them now, and they don't make you look abnormal, they make you look like somebody who's serious about their exercise. So you do need to exercise.

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Karen Brown

You do need to get outside and get fresh air on bad, bad days. Exercise in your house scads and scads of YouTube videos. So many of them for whatever you want. And you know, if you are somebody who has difficulty getting out of a chair, there's chair yoga.

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Karen Brown

If you are somebody that needs to hang on to something, there are exercises for that. If you are somebody who can walk around your house, figure out a little route. And do that, there is no excuse for not exercising and moving your body every day.

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Karen Brown

What happens if you don't move? Things start to accurate atrophy, you know, use it or lose it is a very real thing. So you need to keep moving everything and keeping everything healthy. So when you can get outdoors, do get outdoors.

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Karen Brown

If you can't figure it out for indoors, you know, a while ago, I got a VR headset, Oculus it's called and there are exercises for that, too. So if you want to have some fun, you know, I kind of think that VR might be a really big thing for seniors who age at home kind of think it

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Karen Brown

might be that they're working on other aspects right now, but it's really fun, and there are ways to meet with other people and socially engage through virtual reality. Keep your eye on that anyway. Anyway, 95% of falls do cause hip fracture.

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Karen Brown

So you want to make sure that you're doing absolutely everything you can to mitigate that. Hip protectors, you know? OK, so first of all, I'm going to declare a conflict of interest

here. I have a division called Brown Healthcare, and we have a Canadian distributorship for the number one brand of hip protectors in the world.

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Karen Brown

So I'm a little bit focused on hip protectors as a mitigation strategy. They actually work. They don't work if you leave them sitting in a drawer. And no, they do not make you look like a great big hockey player.

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Karen Brown

They don't. They tend to be used more by people in long term and nursing home care because they've got a bit of a captive audience, but you know how people can find themselves in long-term care because they fall.

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Karen Brown

Because they fall and they break a hip and they can't recover and they lose mobility and independence, so they wind up in long term care. Put the hip protectors on first. And yes, you should wear them 24-7, not just when you go outside.

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Karen Brown

Remember, I just said 50% of falls happen in the home. So you want to make sure you're mitigating all of that and don't just go by any hip protector. Read the studies. Read the independent studies. Don't take my word for it that the kind that I sell are the best.

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Karen Brown

I know that because in an independent study. They were ranked that high. I couldn't beg, borrow or steal my way into that study, but that's the result. So I'm very happy about that, but you need to be happy about that.

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Karen Brown

You need to get a grip now. Let me tell you something I did. Hip protectors are something that are very difficult to get community based adults to wear. Because they feel that they look different. I was once invited to give a talk to a group of women, I think there were there were a couple hundred.

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Karen Brown

There was a woman in the room that I had known for some time, and I asked her if she would wear a hip protector if I got it for her and got the right size and the whole nine yards.

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Karen Brown

She did. She's very tall, thin woman, and I got her. A kind of a style. That is designed for people who are continent. And community dwelling. Able to dress themselves. It's on our website, brownhealthcare.com. You can go and find it there.

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Karen Brown

But regardless, that's the one I got for her. She wore a pair of black pants with a blouse that was tucked in and a cardigan cardigan that she left unbuttoned. When my talk was just about done, I said to them, you know, there is somebody in this room who is wearing a hip protector right now.

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Karen Brown

Everybody stand up and look around and see if you can tell who it is. Nobody was able to identify Luis. Nobody. And when I pointed her out, there was lots of oohing and awwing because nobody could tell and they didn't believe it.

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Karen Brown

I was wearing hip protectors. They didn't believe that. So that just goes to show you that perception is not reality. What you think it's going to be is not in fact what it is, but if you don't want to look different, then don't wind up in a wheelchair or in long term care.

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Karen Brown

What are you willing to do about it? So that's a really good thing. I already mentioned the walking polls. If you already have a mobility device. Such as a cane or a walker, look into ice picks. Look into the kinds of things that you can put on on the feet or the base that will help you in

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Karen Brown

the wintertime with your stability, that's really important. And exercise, we've talked about very, very important. So a couple of tasks for you go look in your closet, pull out all those slippers and shoes and boots. Turn them over and look at the tread.

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Karen Brown

Get rid of the ones that don't serve you. And replace them or put them on your holiday gift list. second thing, go to theoldish.com and find the article about the tread and watch that marketplace episode. I think you'll come away from it thinking, hmm, makes a lot of sense because I certainly did.

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Karen Brown

You really need to look after that, and only you can do that. This is all about you and what you're wearing. You're all grown ups. Nobody can tell you what to wear. So take care of that and do yourself a favor.

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Karen Brown

Until next Wednesday at twelve noon, take care of yourselves and join us again for the next episode. Be well, everybody.