

Home Accidents Are Preventable, Institute Says

What can be done to protect older persons against the rising tide of home and public accidents?

This is a question now engaging the attention of more than three million families throughout the country who have relatives over 65 living with them.

The seriousness of the problem is revealed in a study completed recently by the Institute for Safer Living of the American Mutual Liability Insurance Company, which shows that a high percentage of accidents involving persons over 65 result in their death or permanent crippling injury.

Present day economic problems and a rapidly increasing population over 65 make this a heavy responsibility for all members of the family, the Institute points out. Recent achievements in public health and medicine have reduced the death rate by disease in older age brackets, but the accident rate continues to increase. Accidents, principally around the home, result in death or permanent crippling injury from more than 300,000 oldsters each year.

Falls comprise the worst hazards type of all, and account for more than 75 per cent of these mishaps. Fifty-eight per cent of the falls occur on home stairways and strangely enough on level walk surfaces too.

The Institute lists some of the more important measures that can be taken to safeguard your loved ones over 65.

Whether elderly persons live with you or just come to visit, do all you can to make their quarters convenient and free of obstructions.

Provide "one floor living" for them wherever possible.

Provide bright, shadow-free lighting in all rooms used by them. Night lights are recommended in bedrooms, hallway and bath.

Try to provide assistance to oldsters when stairways must be used; keep stairs free of obstructions and well lighted. Hand rails are a must on all stairs and steps.

Store all commonly used household items, such as dishes and utensils in easily reached places so that climbing or over-reaching is unnecessary.

Show them how to operate any of the newer electrical or gas appliances, stove or heaters in your home.

Keep your home "fire safe." Remember that the danger from fire increases when elderly persons are present.

Provide them comfortable but safe footwear, with non-slip soles and sturdy medium heels.

Encourage elderly persons not to engage in work or chores that are beyond their physical capacity.

When it can be avoided, do not burden grandparents with the responsibility of baby sitting.

Tactfully provide a younger escort when walks on the street or in public are undertaken by aging persons whose sight, hearing or physical reactions endanger them.

Younger persons often fail to recognize the waning physical and mental abilities of oldsters until it is too late, cautions the Institute. Constant alertness of family members will help to prevent an accidental tragedy in your home.

During July and August, 1953, the Tobacco Stabilization Corporation delivered 2,425 checks representing \$35,000 to members from the 1948-49 crop.



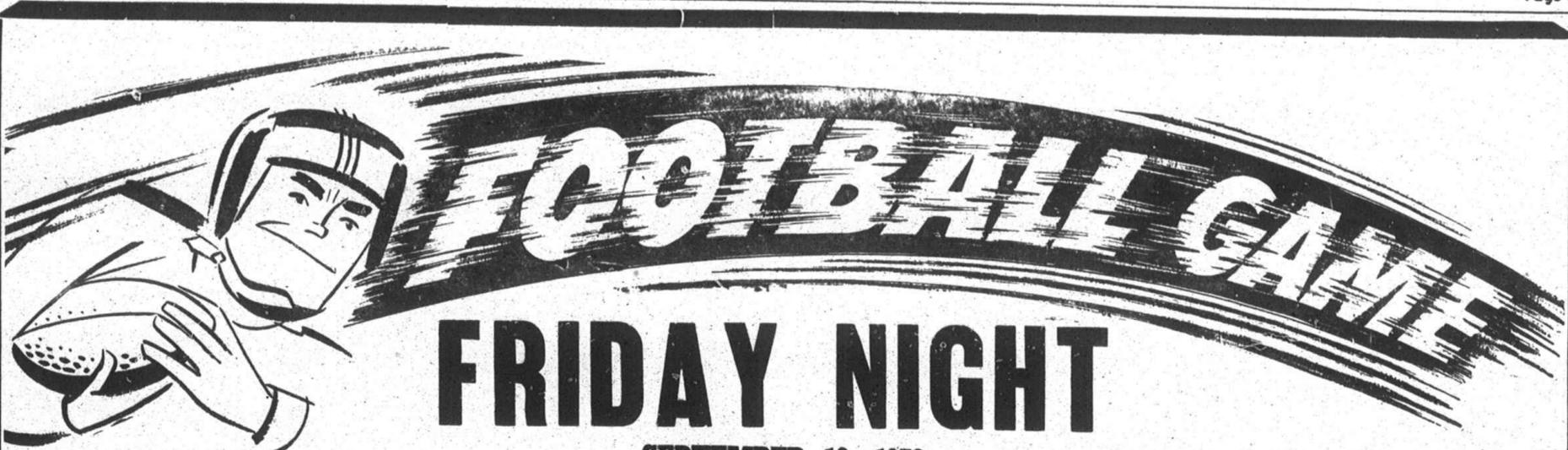
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