

## Falls

### How to prevent falls?

1. Stay physically active.
2. Try balance and strength training exercises.
3. Fall-proof your home.
4. Have your eyes and hearing tested.
5. Find out about the side effects of any medicines you take.
6. Get enough sleep.
7. Stand up slowly.

### Have regular health check-ups and stay active

As we get older it's natural for changes in our bodies to occur. Discuss with your doctor or practice nurse what you can do to maintain your muscle and bone strength.

Find out about the possible side effects of medicines you take. Some medicines might affect your co-ordination or balance. If so, ask your doctor or pharmacist what you can do to lessen your chance of falling.

### Check your vision and hearing

Poor eyesight can increase your chances of having a fall. Make sure the glasses you wear are right for your eyes. Take good care when wearing new glasses especially bifocals. Remember to make a point of having your eyes checked every year or straight away if you notice a change in your vision.

Have your vision and hearing tested often. Even small changes in sight and hearing can make you less stable. So, for example, if you have new glasses, take time to get used to them, and always wear them when you should or, and if you need a hearing aid, be sure it fits well and that you wear it most of the time.

### Wear sensible shoes

Wear well-fitting shoes with non-slip soles to prevent falls. Shoes with low heels offer better balance, and lace-ups or Velcro fastening will usually give you more support than slip-ons.

## Keeping active

If you can exercise, start now. Walking, for example, is a good form of exercise. Taking a daily 30-minute walk will be beneficial to your health.

Talk to your doctor before you start any exercise programme though. Regular exercise helps keep you strong and improves muscle tone. It also helps keep your joints, tendons, and ligaments flexible. Mild weight-bearing exercise -such as walking, climbing stairs -may even slow bone loss from osteoporosis.

## Make Your Home Safe

- Secure any loose rugs and watch out for pets to ensure they do not cause you to trip or fall.
- Limit the amount of alcohol you drink.
- Always stand up slowly after eating, lying down, or resting. Getting up too quickly can cause your blood pressure to drop, which can make you feel faint.
- Use a cane, walking stick, or walker to help you feel steadier when you walk. Wear rubber-soled, low-heeled shoes that fully support your feet. Wearing only socks or shoes with smooth soles on stairs or waxed floors can be unsafe.
- Hold the handrails when you use the stairs.
- Stay away from a freshly washed floor.
- Reach sticks are special grabbing tools that you can buy at many hardware or most medical supply stores.
- Make sure there is good lighting with light switches at the top and bottom of the stairs.
- Keep areas where you walk tidy.
- Check that all carpets are fixed firmly to the floor, so they won't slip.
- Mount grab bars near toilets and on both the inside and outside of your tub and shower.
- Place non-skid mats, strips, or carpet on all surfaces that may get wet.
- Keep night lights on light switches close to your bed.
- Keep your telephone near your bed.
- Arrange your furniture and other objects so they are not in your way when you walk.
- Make sure your sofas and chairs are a good height for you, so that you can get into and out of them easily.

If you have any questions or need further information, please contact The Balance Team  
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## Accessibility

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