

housing&care21

Falls Prevention

This booklet will give useful guidance on how to stay safe inside and outside your home



Myths about falls...

Only really frail people fall...

Unfortunately 1 in 3 people over the age of 65 will fall this year with an estimated 50% of people over the age of 80 falling annually. Many of these people are in good health!

It's an inevitable part of getting older...

Although the risk of falling increases with age; it is certainly not an inevitable part of the ageing process!

Preventing Falls

Having a fall in the home or outside can be a very scary if not dangerous event. This booklet aims to provide you with the knowledge to help reduce your risk of falling and keep you safe!

One of the major contributing factors to falling is your own health. Below is a checklist of factors that you need to be aware of, to reduce your risk of falling.

- I always remember to take my prescribed medication
- I know when to take my medication (If you are unsure about this you can speak to your pharmacist or doctor about this)
- I have had my yearly medication review with my doctor
- I have reported any falls, or dizziness on standing to my doctor and Court Manager
- I have had an eye test in the past 12 months
- I have bi-focal or varifocal glasses and know to take care when out and about, as the change in these lenses can increase the risk of falls.
- I always remember to use my walking aids
- I know that rushing to the toilet is a cause of falls
- I always drink enough fluids (1.6 litres/3 pints a day for women and 2 litres/3.5 pints for men)

Your home

Many people fall in their own home, but there are things you can do to prevent this.

Lighting:

- There is an increased risk of falling if your room is not well lit. Turn the lights on to make sure you can see trip hazards.
- Lamps are a great way of keeping a room well lit without making it too bright - just remember to tidy wires and keep walkways clear.
- Having a light switch at the top and bottom of the stairs is a great idea.
- Keeping a bathroom or passageway light on during the night is an easy way of making sure you can find your way to the bathroom without tripping.

Living areas:

- Keep your living areas free of clutter! Clutter in walkways is a significant cause of falls.
- Rugs and mats should all have a non-slip underlay.
- Having the telephone positioned close to where you sit can prevent you rushing to answer a call.

Kitchen:

- Arrange your cupboards to reduce the amount of stretching you do. Never stand on a chair to reach the top shelf!
- Clean up spills straight away.
- Consider having a chair in the kitchen, so you can take regular breaks.

Bathroom:

- Use a non-slip mat in your bath or shower.
- Grab rails in the bathroom can help prevent falls and can steady you if the floor is slippery.
- Keeping all of your cleaning products in an easy to reach location helps to keep you safe.

Garden:

- Make sure your outdoor walk ways are well lit at night.
- Safety rails, helping you in and out of the house can be a great help.
- Keeping paths clean and well-maintained helps you to not only enjoy your garden, but to keep safe from tripping too!

After a fall outside

A fall can be a very scary event and can leave you feeling really upset and worried. Here are our tips on how to deal with a fall.

- Keep as calm as you can and take a few deep breaths.
- Check for any injuries. If you are unhurt and feel like you can get back up, slowly get back on to your feet.
- If you are hurt or cannot get back to your feet, try and get assistance.
- If you have hurt yourself, you may need to go to hospital - dial 999
- When you are safe, think about why you have fallen and make a plan to try and stop this happening in the future.
- Speak to your GP, they may be able to help!

There are many potential causes of falls outside of the home; here are some of our top tips on how to stay safe outside!

- Even if other people may be rushing around you, always take your time! Your safety is the most important thing.
- If you wear glasses, bring them with you and wear them when you are out and about to make sure you notice any trip hazards.
- Use your walking aid and check that your footwear is appropriate for the surfaces you will be walking on - bearing in mind the weather outside.
- Watch out for uneven paving slabs, curbs and shop entrances.
- Always use official crossings in the road.
- Keep your bus pass/money in an easy to reach place.
- Don't be afraid to ask people for help if you need it!

After a fall inside

- Pressing your pendant alarm is a great way of getting help quickly.
- If you aren't near a phone to ring anyone, bang on the wall or radiator to attract attention.
- Try and keep comfortable. If there are cushions nearby put these under your head and pull tablecloths and rugs over you to keep warm.
- If you have hurt yourself, try not to panic. Call 999 for assistance.





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Regulated by the Social Housing Regulator Reg. No. L0055
Community Benefit Society FCA Reg. No. 16791R



This leaflet was produced by final year Medical Students at Keele University in association with Housing & Care 21. C. Graham, S. Iqbal, S. Sadiq and A. Dawson. 2018