

Falls

Information for residents, families and carers



Falls are a common cause of injury for older people, including people living in residential aged care.

Falls can cause bruising, broken bones and head injuries, and you may need to go to hospital.

Falls can often be prevented. They are not a normal part of ageing.

Signs you may be at risk of falling

- You feel unsteady on your feet.
- You are worried about falling, often because you have fallen before.
- You can't move around very well by yourself.
- You have slow reactions.
- Your eyesight is poor.
- Your muscles are weak.
- You take a lot of medicines.
- You don't eat or drink very much.
- You are confused.
- You have other illnesses.

Ways to stay on your feet

- Always use your walking frame or walking stick if you have one.
- Join in exercise classes to help with balance and strength.
- If you have trouble moving by yourself, call staff to help. Don't try to get up alone.
- Ask staff or your family to walk with you.
- Wear your glasses and make sure they are clean. Ask staff to arrange an eye test for you.
- Wear flat shoes that are comfortable and fit well.
- Don't rush.
- Use a night light during the night. Call staff for help if you need to get up at night.
- Clear clutter from your room so you don't trip.

Ask your doctor if:

- your medicines could be making you dizzy, drowsy or confused
- you need vitamin D and calcium to keep your muscles and bones strong.

If you have fallen in the past

If you have fallen in the past, you may be worried that you will fall again. This fear can stop you from being active.

Join an exercise class to help with your balance and strength. This may make you less worried about falling again.

Working together

You and your family are important members of the care team. You know what is normal for you.

Let staff know if you notice any changes, feel unwell, dizzy or unsteady on your feet. Don't wait to see if you get better – it's always best to get help early.

Working together with staff will help to keep you healthy and out of hospital. Talk to staff and ask questions. They need your help to give you the best care.

Questions to ask staff

- Do I need to see a physiotherapist to help with my strength and balance?
- Could any of my medicines be contributing to my falls?



Want to know more?

'Falls prevention for older people' fact sheet <www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au>

Disclaimer: This health information is for general purposes only. Please consult with your doctor or other health professional to make sure this information is right for you.

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