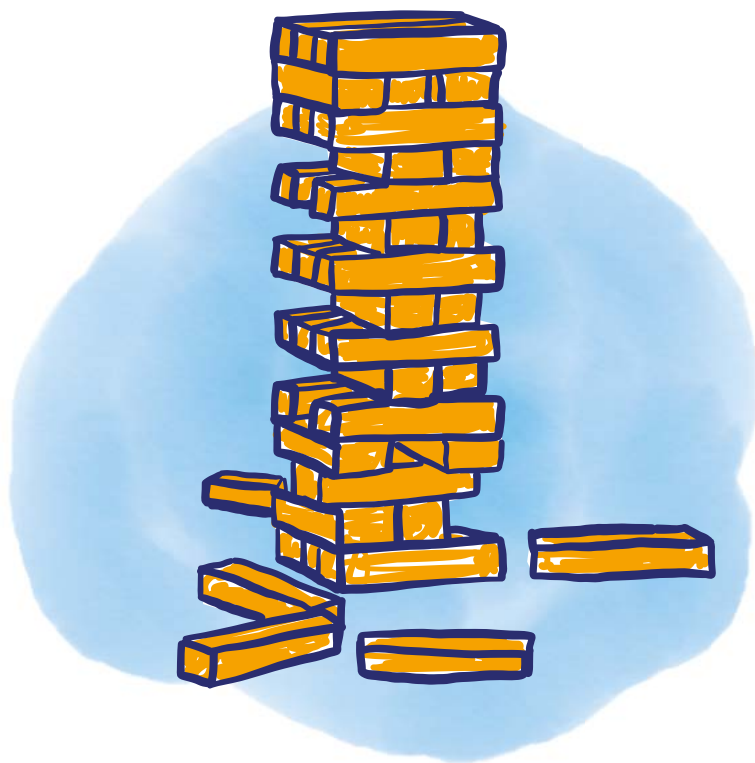


# Staying steady



How to reduce your  
risk of falling

# Information written with you in mind.

This information guide has been produced with the help of older people, carers and expert peer reviewers.

Published: **December 2023**

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## What this guide is about

**As we get older, lots of us may start to feel a bit unsteady on our feet and become worried about falling. But there are simple things you can do to help yourself feel more confident and avoid a slip or fall.**

Having a fall can leave you feeling quite shaken up – and even the thought of falling can affect your confidence. However, while falls can become more of a concern as we get older, they aren't inevitable. There's a lot you can do to reduce your chance of having a fall, even if you've had one in the past.

This guide explains ways you can reduce your risk of falling by looking after your health and checking your home is safe. There are things that can help you stay independent for longer and make day-to-day life that bit easier.



This symbol indicates where information differs for Wales and Northern Ireland. As far as possible, the information given in this guide is applicable across the UK.

## Worried about falling?

You might be nervous because you've had a fall before or because you've noticed you're starting to feel unsteady on your feet. You might have noticed changes to your health, or just feel like you're slowing down a little.

Whatever the reason, it isn't unusual to become cautious and lose confidence, and this can stop you doing the things you used to do and make you feel more isolated.

If you're feeling like this, you might be reluctant to ask for help. It can be difficult to admit that the things you used to be able to do are getting trickier. You might also worry that accepting help will make you less independent.

But really, admitting that things have changed and doing something about it could help you stay independent for longer – so it's important to consider the support you may need, now and in the future.

There's plenty of information in this guide about the sorts of things you can do and who you can turn to for support. Making some adjustments and getting the right help can make you feel more confident again.

**“Mum seemed to lose a bit of her spark after she had a fall. But I think she's getting it back now.”**

Jasmine, 57





## How to get help from the NHS

If you've had a fall or you're feeling unsteady, tell a healthcare professional, such as your doctor – even if you feel fine otherwise. There are many reasons why you might be feeling unsteady, and there are ways to help you feel more confident.

Your doctor can check your balance and the way you walk to see if improvements can be made. They may refer you for a falls risk assessment or to a falls prevention service. These services are run by healthcare professionals with specialist training to help people improve and maintain their strength and balance.

### **The purpose of a falls risk assessment is to:**

- listen to what you think the problem could be
- try to work out what's making you feel unsteady
- agree on an action plan to reduce your risk of falling.

Following your assessment, you should have an action plan in place that's designed to meet your individual needs. This should be regularly reviewed so healthcare professionals can see how you're getting on. It might include:

- strength and balance exercises
- a home safety check
- checks of your eyesight and the medicines you take
- explanation of how to get up safely if you fall
- explanation of how to get help if you need it
- investigation of any continence problems you have, to make sure you don't need to rush to the toilet.

**“I went to the GP because I was worried about having a fall. I ended up having an assessment.”**

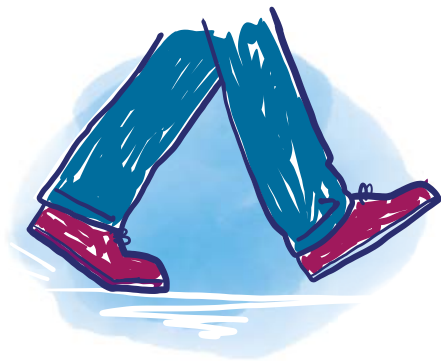
Muriel, 90



## Good to know



The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (page 35) has information on its website about how you can prevent falls and what treatment may be offered if you've had a fall.



## Staying active

**It might feel as if moving less will help you avoid a fall. But moving more and staying active is actually the best thing you can do to stay as mobile and independent as possible.**

### Moving more

Being active can help you maintain your strength and flexibility and improve your energy levels, so that you can carry on doing the things you enjoy.

Our bodies were made to move, and there's no need to stop being active just because you get older. That said, there are lots of reasons why getting moving can become trickier. You might have been ill and lost some strength in your muscles. Maybe a health condition affects your mobility. Or perhaps you've simply got out of the habit, and you're not sure what kind of activity or movement would work for you.

Being active doesn't have to mean doing vigorous exercise or even doing anything outside of your normal routine. Instead, find ways to try to move a bit more throughout the day – in whatever way works for you. Doing the housework, getting off the bus a stop earlier, or trying out chair-based exercises are all great ways to stay active. If you're staying active by getting outside more, be aware of potential hazards, such as uneven pavements, tree roots and wet leaves.

Keeping moving as you get older has lots of benefits. Not only can it help you stay steady on your feet, but it can also lessen aches and pains – and give your mood a boost too.

Where possible, it's a good idea to:

- be as active as you can, in a way that works for you
- limit or break up the time you spend sitting still
- build up to doing about 2.5 hours per week of moderate exercise (that gets you breathing harder and your heart pumping faster), starting with just 10 minutes at a time
- do activities that improve muscle strength at least twice a week
- do activities that improve balance, co-ordination and flexibility twice a week – this is particularly important if you've had a fall or you're afraid of falling.

However, what we can and can't do varies, and what's important is to do what you can when you can. Find something that suits you and your needs – whether that's taking a brisk walk or exercising from your favourite armchair. Moving more is always beneficial, however you do it.

## Good to know



As we get older, there's lots that can get in the way of doing the things we used to. Whether you're finding it harder to move around or you've noticed a change in your energy levels, our **Healthy living** guide has more information on different ways you can get active.



## Improving your strength and balance

Activities that improve your strength and balance are particularly important as you get older because they can help with your posture and co-ordination.

Activities that improve your strength and balance include:

- climbing the stairs frequently
- rising slowly and repeatedly to a standing position from a chair
- walking, playing badminton, dancing or practising yoga
- taking part in special strength and balance exercise classes, tai chi classes or exercise-to-music classes.

Make sure that any exercise classes, or exercises described in guides or videos, are suitable for you and that you feel comfortable doing them. If you're not sure, you haven't been exercising regularly, or you have a heart condition, speak to your GP first. See 'How to get help from the NHS' on pages 6-7 for more information.



For more information about recommended activities as well as free exercise guides and videos, visit the NHS website. In Wales, visit the NHS 111 Wales website and in Northern Ireland, visit the NI Direct website. See page 34 for contact details.

In Wales, Age Cymru runs a number of physical activity programmes to help older people become more active, including walking groups, tai chi and Low Impact Functional Training (which includes a range of exercises with both seated and standing variations). For more information, call **029 2043 1555** or visit **[www.agecymru.org.uk/physical-activity](http://www.agecymru.org.uk/physical-activity)**.

## Good to know



Exercises that improve muscle strength and balance can be especially helpful if you have a condition that causes joint pain. See the Versus Arthritis (page 35) booklet **Keep moving** for more information.

## Getting started and keeping it up

Lots of us have spent our lives on the move – running around after children, holding down busy jobs, and keeping up with friends and hobbies. And while it can be nice to enjoy a slower pace of life as we get older, there's no reason we have to just because of our age.

Making regular activity a part of your routine is one of the best ways to stay well as you get older – and it can also be an opportunity to socialise and meet new people. And if you start a regular activity with someone else, whether that's a regular walk or a weekly exercise class, you can help motivate each other to stick with it.

Sometimes it can seem like a lot of effort to start doing more, so a good way to get started is to try different activities and find something that you enjoy and works for you. Keep your goals simple and realistic. Once you know what kind of activity is right for you, start gently and build up gradually. Aim to do a little bit more each time, if you can.

It's easier to keep up an activity you enjoy – and that's when you'll improve and begin to feel the benefits. As you become stronger and more flexible and your balance improves, daily tasks should become that bit easier.

### Good to know



If you experience chest pain or feel faint during an activity, stop immediately and contact your doctor.

## Staying active in a care home

If you live in a care home, it's important to try and keep moving. Walking, for example, is an easy way to stay active and it's low impact, so it doesn't put lots of strain on your joints.

There might be a weekly programme of activities that you can take part in too, such as some gentle stretching or a dance class. If there isn't, you could ask about starting one with the help of care home staff.

**“When we were looking for a care home, we spoke to the manager and she reassured us they had lots of activities for residents.”**

Bob, 79



### Good to know



Exercises that make your legs stronger can help prevent falls. If you're not sure where to start, you could try a balance training exercise, such as a heel raise. To do this, slowly rise onto your tiptoes and then lower your feet back down again – you can try building up to 10 to 15 repetitions. Hold onto the back of a chair or ask someone to support you if you need help with balancing.



## Your health

If you've noticed you're not as steady as you used to be, it's worth having your eyes, ears and feet checked for any problems that could be sorted out.

### Eyesight, hearing and balance

Your vision and hearing play a vital role in keeping you balanced, so having your eyes and ears tested can help reduce the risk of a fall.

#### Eyecare

Sight problems are more common in later life, so it's important you look after your eyes in any way you can.

- Get your eyes checked and your glasses prescription reviewed at least every 2 years – or more often if your optician recommends it.
- Have a regular eye test even if you think your sight is fine, as opticians can detect eye conditions at an early stage. NHS eye tests in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are free once you reach the age of 60.
- Glasses fitted with bifocal or varifocal lenses can make objects and surfaces appear closer than they really are. This could cause you to trip or lose your balance, particularly on stairs. If you use these kinds of lenses, ask your optician for advice.

- If you care for someone who might be unable to recognise or communicate that they have a sight problem – for example, someone living with dementia – arrange regular eye tests for them. You can ask the optician to adapt the tests to accommodate the person's needs. Encourage the person you care for to wear their glasses and make sure the lenses are cleaned frequently.
- Contact the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) for information about eye problems (page 35).
- If you or anyone you care for finds it difficult to get to the optician for health reasons, look for an optician who offers a home-visiting service. If you live in a care home, staff may arrange a regular visit from a domiciliary eye care service. You can search for opticians near you on the NHS website (page 34).



In Wales, visit the NHS 111 Wales website and in Northern Ireland, visit the NI Direct website (page 34).

## Good to know



If you receive certain benefits such as Income Support or the Guarantee Credit part of Pension Credit, or you're on Universal Credit and meet the criteria, you could be entitled to help with the cost of new glasses. If you're not eligible for these benefits but you're on a low income, you may be entitled to help through the NHS Low Income Scheme (page 34). See our factsheet **Help with health costs** for more information. In Wales, see Age Cymru's factsheet **Help with NHS health costs in Wales and services which are free for older people**.

## Hearing problems

Our ears are essential in maintaining balance, so it's important we look after them. The risk of hearing loss increases as we get older, but people often wait several years after noticing their hearing is getting worse before raising it with their doctor.

- Talk to your doctor as soon as you notice your hearing isn't what it used to be, as a problem with your ears can affect your balance. If there's no medical reason for the change in your hearing (such as a build-up of wax or an ear infection), you can be referred for a hearing test and prescribed an NHS digital hearing aid in one or both ears, if necessary.
- If you care for someone who's been prescribed a hearing aid, make sure they wear it and check the batteries frequently.
- Contact RNID for more information (page 35). You can try the free hearing check on their website or call their information line to see whether you ought to visit your doctor.

**“My husband went to the doctor after having problems with his hearing for a while. He wears a hearing aid now, which has helped him a lot.”**

Sheila, 72



## Good to know



In some areas, you can refer yourself to an audiologist for a hearing assessment. Check at your GP surgery whether this is an option for you.



## **Combined sight and hearing problems**

Sight and hearing problems can appear gradually as we get older, so it can sometimes be hard to notice them.

These types of problem are often thought of as natural things to expect as we get older. But they can have a huge impact on day-to-day life – so it's important to seek help if they're affecting you.

Your local council's sensory team can offer help and support. Following an assessment, their specialist staff will explain what help is available to you. They may also offer mobility training as well as advice on moving around when you're at home or out and about – plus guidance on how you can stay as fit and active as possible.

## **Next steps**



Contact your local council's adult social services department to explain how your vision and hearing difficulties are affecting your daily life and ask for an assessment. Contact Deafblind UK (page 34) for advice if you have problems with both your sight and hearing.

## Managing your medicines

Low blood pressure and poorly controlled diabetes can make you feel faint or dizzy – as can certain medicines or being on a lot of medication. If you ever feel like this, let your doctor or pharmacist know – they may need to check the dosage you're on or consider alternative medicines.



If you take medication, it should be reviewed regularly in case you no longer need it or the dose needs to be changed.

If you have any concerns about your medicines, speak to your doctor or pharmacist.

**“I’ve been on lots of different medications and it can be hard to keep up with them all, so I asked the GP for a medication review.”**

Ray, 72



### Good to know



Alcohol can increase your risk of falling in and of itself – but it's worth knowing that it can also interact with some medicines in a way that affects your balance. Check the leaflet that comes with your medicine for possible side effects.

## Taking care of your feet

Problems with your feet and footwear can stop you getting out and about. They can also affect your balance and increase your risk of falling – so it's important to look after your feet and make sure you're wearing appropriate footwear.



These tips can help you feel steadier:

- Report problems such as foot pain or decreased sensation in your feet to your doctor or practice nurse.
- Keep your toenails short. If you're finding it difficult to cut them yourself, try asking a friend or family member for help. Or you can ask your local Age UK whether it offers a toenail-cutting service. In Wales, contact your local Age Cymru. There may be a charge for these services.
- Always wear shoes, sandals or slippers. To avoid slips, don't walk indoors in bare feet, socks or tights.
- Wear shoes or sandals that fit well. High-sided shoes with low heels, thin soles and good grip are normally a safer choice.
- Avoid wearing high heels.
- Wear slippers with good grip that fasten up. Loose or worn-out slippers can cause you to fall.
- Make sure your clothing doesn't trail on the ground where it might trip you up.
- If you have arthritis, you might find that trainers or well-cushioned shoes are more comfortable and offer more support than ordinary shoes. But make sure the soles aren't too thick, as you could feel unsteady if you can't feel the floor beneath your feet. Ask your doctor or chiropodist for advice.

## Keeping your bones strong

Stronger bones don't just make a fall less likely, they reduce the risk of more severe effects if you do fall. Regular exercise that keeps you on your feet, such as walking, bowls and tennis, helps keep bones strong.



### Calcium and vitamin D

You need calcium and vitamin D to maintain strong bones – both of which can be found in certain foods.

Dairy foods, fortified soya products and canned fish (including the bones) are all good sources of calcium. Calcium is also found in fortified breakfast cereals, white bread, pulses and nuts (such as almonds).

Salmon, sardines and other oily fish, eggs and fortified spreads are all good sources of vitamin D – however, it's difficult to get enough vitamin D from diet alone. Sunshine is the best source of vitamin D. Try to get outside for short periods each day from March to October, exposing at least your forearms and hands to the sun – but be careful not to let your skin redden or burn.

In autumn and winter, the sun isn't strong enough to produce vitamin D and most people won't get enough from food – so adults of all ages should consider taking a daily vitamin D supplement of ten micrograms (10µg).

You might need a vitamin D supplement all year round if you spend most of the day indoors, have darker skin, or cover your skin for cultural or health reasons. If you think you aren't getting enough vitamin D, ask your doctor or pharmacist for advice.

## Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis causes bones to become more fragile. This means minor bumps or falls can result in a broken bone.

Your risk of osteoporosis is increased by:

- your age – the older you are, the more likely you are to develop it
- a history of osteoporosis in your family
- a low body weight
- heavy drinking, smoking and a lack of exercise
- some medications, such as long-term steroids, anti-epileptic drugs and some cancer treatments
- an early menopause or hysterectomy with removal of the ovaries if you're female
- low levels of testosterone following surgery for some types of cancer if you're male.

## Next steps



For more information about osteoporosis, contact the Royal Osteoporosis Society (page 35) or use their online osteoporosis risk checker at **[theros.org.uk/risk-checker](https://theros.org.uk/risk-checker)**. Speak to your doctor if you think you could be at risk of osteoporosis – this may be more likely if either of your parents broke a hip.

## Mary is 82 years old and lives in sheltered accommodation.

**Joining a seated exercise programme has improved Mary's fitness and balance.**

'My balance was never any good, but it's got worse as I've got older. I recently had a bad fall in my flat. I tripped over the rug and gashed my head on the fireplace. I needed stitches and looked a real picture with two black eyes. It really knocked me for six, and I became wary about going out and doing jobs around the house.

'Then Alison, the warden, asked me if I wanted to join the weekly seated exercise programme run by our local Age UK in the communal lounge. I knew about it but thought that I was too old for exercising – and I like to keep myself to myself anyway. But Alison persuaded me.





‘The first session was quite tiring, but I began to feel better as we went along. My strength, balance and fitness have all improved – and I’m less worried about falling over.

‘It’s really good fun, too – definitely not what I expected. Everyone has a good natter and a cup of tea afterwards. It’s more of a club than an exercise class. I now speak to people I’ve seen around for years but hadn’t talked to before, so it’s been good in lots of ways.

‘One special bonus was meeting Liz, who has become a real friend. We can go on outings together because she drives, which has made a big difference to me. I look forward to things again, which I haven’t done for a while.’



## Around the home

Sometimes even familiar environments can become difficult to navigate as we get older. But there are some simple things you can do to feel safer and more comfortable at home.

### Asking for a care needs assessment

If you think you could benefit from adaptations to your home, get in touch with the adult social services department of your local council, or with the integrated care team in your local Health and Social Care Trust if you live in Northern Ireland. They'll be able to give you more information about your options and may offer you a free care needs assessment. This involves an assessor coming to your home and having a look at how you're managing everyday tasks and discussing what you'd like to achieve in your day-to-day life.

### Next steps



For more information about the support you might be entitled to at home, see our guide **Getting help at home**.

## Checking your home environment

To help make your home safer, keep an eye out for things that could make you slip, trip or fall. While some things might seem obvious, it's surprising how often they're overlooked – so it's worth thinking about these questions:

- Is there a night light, a bedside light or a torch by the bed in case you need to get up in the night?
- Is there good lighting elsewhere in your home – particularly on the stairs?
- Are things tidied out of the way of stairs, steps and hallways?
- Are there handrails on both sides of the stairs?
- Are floors clear of trailing wires, wrinkled or fraying rugs and carpets, or anything else you might trip or slip on?
- Is there a non-slip mat and a fitted handrail in the bath?
- Are there non-slip mats under rugs?
- Are garden paths clear and free from moss? Watch out for other uneven paths and slippery surfaces as well – handrails might be a helpful addition in some situations.
- Do you use a stepladder to reach high places? Always ask someone to help if you're using a ladder – and avoid standing on chairs.
- Does your pet wear a collar that you could put a bell on? Pets can get under your feet, so it's good to be aware of where they are when you're moving about.

# Keeping safe at home

Making small adjustments to your daily life doesn't mean you have to limit your activities. In fact, it can mean you can have more freedom and confidence, allowing you to stay independent for longer.

Here are some tips to stay safe:

- Take your time getting up, and then stand still for a moment to steady yourself before walking. Sitting or standing up too quickly can make you feel lightheaded. Tense your arms and legs a few times before getting up from a chair and sit on the side of the bed for a few minutes before standing when getting out of bed.
- Move your head slowly to avoid dizziness, especially if you have arthritis in your spine or neck. Speak to your doctor if you ever feel dizzy or need to use furniture for support when moving around your home.
- Try to stay warm, as cold muscles don't work as well and may lead to accidents and injuries.
- Get help with tasks like cleaning windows or changing light bulbs if they make you feel dizzy or lightheaded, or if you feel unsteady.

**"I have to take a minute when I get up from sitting down to steady myself."**

Paul, 78



## The stairs

Getting up and down the stairs can start to feel more difficult as we get older – even if we’re relatively mobile. You may run out of breath quite quickly, or you might worry about tripping and falling.

But there are a few things that can make getting up and down the stairs seem less daunting:

- Make sure your stairs are well lit and free from any trip hazards.
- Pay attention to what you’re doing and don’t hurry – there’s nothing wrong with taking a bit longer.
- Think about having a second banister fitted, or even a stair lift – these could make all the difference.

## Next steps



Local Age UKs operate handyman services across much of the country. These services offer extra help with small practical jobs, from putting up curtain rails or door chains to installing energy-efficient light bulbs. The cost will depend on the nature of the work required. To find out details of your local Age UK, call Age UK Advice, and in Wales, contact Age Cymru Advice (page 33).

## Getting a home safety check

We all want to be safe, especially when we're in our own homes. Contact your local council to find out if it offers home safety checks or a handyperson scheme.



Some local Age UKs also offer handyperson schemes to assist with small repairs and identify home hazards – why not get in touch with yours to see whether any support is available? To find out more about what can be a trip hazard at home, see page 25.

Alternatively, there may be a Home Improvement Agency (HIA) offering similar help locally. Contact Foundations (page 34), which is the national body for HIAs, or your local council.



In Wales, contact your local Age Cymru to find out if there's a handyperson or HandyVan scheme in your area or contact Care and Repair Cymru (page 34). In Northern Ireland, check with Age NI to find out more about local handyperson schemes (page 33).

## Next steps



For more information about aids and adaptations that can make your home safer and advice on how to prevent accidents, see our guides **Adapting your home** and **Staying safe**.

# Telecare

If you're worried about what might happen if you fall, simple technology known as 'telecare' can help put your mind at ease. For example, a bed or chair sensor can detect if you've got up but not returned within a set time – and can then automatically send an alert to a carer or call centre in case you've fallen.

## Personal alarms

Personal alarms allow you to call for help if you need it – for example, if you're unwell or if you have a fall and can't reach a telephone. By pressing a button on a pendant or wristband, you can contact a 24-hour response centre. Staff at the emergency response centre will then call either your chosen contact – a neighbour, relative or friend – or the emergency services if the situation is more urgent.

Your local council may run a telecare or personal alarm scheme. Visit [www.gov.uk/apply-for-community-alarm](https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-community-alarm) to search by postcode and apply for an alarm.

**“I'd heard about personal alarms at a falls clinic so I contacted the council to see if I could get one.”**

Marion, 86



## Next steps

See our guide **Adapting your home** for more information about telecare.

# Steps to staying steady

This handy checklist runs through 8 key things you can do to help avoid a fall.

## 1 Stay active

Focus on activities that challenge your balance and strengthen your legs and upper body, like walking, gardening or dancing (see pages 8-13)



## 2 Check your sight and hearing

Go for regular sight tests and report any hearing difficulties you have to identify any problems that may be affecting your balance (see pages 14-17).



## 3 Ask about your medicines

Certain medicines can make you feel faint or affect your balance. Let your GP or pharmacist know if you ever feel like this (see page 18).



## 4 Look after your feet

Wear well-fitting shoes and slippers and tell your GP or chiropodist about any foot problems (see page 19).



## **5** Get enough vitamin D

Vitamin D is essential for keeping your bones strong – the best source is sunshine (see page 20).



## **6** Eat a calcium-rich diet

Calcium helps to keep your bones strong. Good sources are dairy foods, fortified soya products and canned fish with bones (see page 20).



## **7** Check for hazards at home

Make sure your home is hazard free and well lit (see pages 25-27).



## **8** Visit your GP

If you've had a fall or you're worried about falling, tell your GP. There are many ways to help you feel confident again (see pages 6-7).



# What to do if you have a fall

Even if you follow our tips to staying steady, it's good to be prepared and know what to do if you do have a fall.

## If you're not hurt and you're in a safe place

The first thing to do is try to get yourself up. If you can, the best way to do this is by rolling onto your hands and knees and then holding onto something stable, such as a bed or armchair. Try not to get up too quickly.

Even if you're not injured, it's a good idea to speak with your GP or healthcare professional about your fall so that you can work out what the cause was and how you can reduce your risk of falling in the future.

## If you're unable to get up or you're injured

If you have a personal alarm, you can use this to get help – for more information, see page 29. Alternatively, you could bang on a wall or the floor to get the attention of neighbours or passers-by. If you carry a mobile phone, it's a good idea to have the phone numbers of key friends or neighbours saved.

You can also call **999** or **111** for help. Many areas operate a falls response service. These provide quick responses to people who have fallen but don't have any serious injuries. If your area operates a falls response service, you may get help from emergency responders, fire service crews or St John's ambulance.

While waiting for help to arrive, try to keep warm by covering yourself with something within reach, such as a coat, blanket or rug. If you can and it's not too painful, try to keep moving – this will help to keep you warm and maintain blood flow.

# Useful organisations

## Age UK

We provide information and advice for people in later life through our Age UK Advice Line, publications and website.

**Age UK Advice: 0800 169 65 65**

Lines are open seven days a week from 8am to 7pm.

**[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)**

In Wales, contact Age Cymru Advice: **0300 303 44 98**

**[www.agecymru.org.uk](http://www.agecymru.org.uk)**

In Northern Ireland, contact Age NI: **0808 808 7575**

**[www.ageni.org](http://www.ageni.org)**

In Scotland, contact Age Scotland: **0800 124 4222**

**[www.agescotland.org.uk](http://www.agescotland.org.uk)**

## Deafblind UK

Provides services, information and advice for people who are deafblind or have sight and hearing loss.

Tel: **0800 132 320 (for voice or text calls)**

Email: **info@deafblind.org.uk**

**www.deafblind.org.uk**

## Home Improvement Agencies

Help older homeowners and private tenants organise repairs, improvements and adaptations to their homes.

In England, contact **Foundations**

Tel: **0300 124 0315**

**foundations.uk.com**

In Wales, contact **Care & Repair Cymru**

Tel: **02920 107580**

**www.careandrepair.org.uk**

## NHS

Comprehensive information service to help you take control of your healthcare. The website includes an A-Z health dictionary and symptom checker.

**www.nhs.uk**

In Wales, contact **NHS 111 Wales**

Tel: **111**

**www.111.wales.nhs.uk**

In Northern Ireland, contact **NI Direct**

**www.nidirect.gov.uk**

## NHS Low Income Scheme

Provides full or partial help with health costs for people on a low income.

Tel: **0300 330 1343**

**www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/nhs-low-income-scheme**

## **NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence)**

Provides guidance on being healthy and treating illnesses in England and Wales. You can download **Falls in older people** from their website: **[www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg161](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg161)**

## **RNIB (Royal National Institute of Blind People)**

Provides information and support for blindness and visual impairment.

Tel: **0303 123 9999**

**[www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk)**

In Wales, go to **[www.rnib.org.uk/nations/wales](http://www.rnib.org.uk/nations/wales)**

## **RNID**

Provides advice and support through an information line and range of factsheets.

Tel: **0808 808 0123**

Text: **07360 268 988**

Email: **[contact@rnid.org.uk](mailto:contact@rnid.org.uk)**

**[www.rnid.org.uk](http://www.rnid.org.uk)**

## **Royal Osteoporosis Society**

Offers information and support on prevention and treatment of osteoporosis.

Tel: **0808 800 0035**

**[www.theros.org.uk](http://www.theros.org.uk)**

## **Versus Arthritis**

Provides information and support to people with arthritis.

Tel: **0800 5200 520**

**[www.versusarthritis.org](http://www.versusarthritis.org)**





<sup>†</sup> The Age UK network includes the charity, its trading companies and national partners (Cymru, Scotland and NI). We also work closely with local Age UKs. Age UK is a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England (registered charity number 1128267 and registered company number 6825798). The registered address is Age UK, 7th Floor, One America Square, 17 Crosswall, London EC3N 2LB.



# Help us be there for someone else

We hope you found this guide helpful. When times are tough, it's so important to get some support. Did you know you could help us reach someone else who needs a little help? Here's how:

1

## Give your views on guides like this

Our Readers' Panel helps make sure the information we produce is right for older people and their families. We'd love you to join. Go to [www.ageuk.org.uk/readers-panel](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/readers-panel).

2

## Donate to us

Every donation we receive helps us be there for someone when they need us. To make a donation, call us on **0800 169 8787** or go to [www.ageuk.org.uk/donate](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/donate).

3

## Volunteer with us

Our volunteers make an incredible difference to people's lives. Get involved by contacting your local Age UK or at [www.ageuk.org.uk/volunteer](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/volunteer).

4

## Campaign with us

We campaign to make life better for older people, and rely on the help of our strong network of campaigners. Add your voice to our latest campaigns at [www.ageuk.org.uk/campaigns](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/campaigns).

5

## Remember us in your will

A gift to Age UK in your will is a very special way of helping older people get expert support in the years to come. Find out more by calling **020 3033 1421** or visit [www.ageuk.org.uk/legacy](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/legacy).

# What should I do now?

You may want to read some of our relevant information guides and factsheets, such as:

- **Getting help at home**
- **Advice for carers**
- **Healthy living**

You can order any of our guides or factsheets by giving our Advice Line a ring for free on **0800 169 65 65** (8am-7pm, 365 days a year).

Our friendly advisers are there to help answer any questions.

All of our publications are available in large print and audio formats.

There's plenty of really useful information on our website, too. Visit **[www.ageuk.org.uk/wellbeing](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/wellbeing)** to get started.



**0800 169 65 65**  
**[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)**

If contact details for your local Age UK are not in the below box, call Age UK Advice free on **0800 169 65 65**.



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