

# Preventing Falls

## 5 Top Tips to Reduce the Risk

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### Our Top 5 Tips

#### Falls in The Home

Each year around 255,000 people over the age of 65 are hospitalised due to falls in their home or care home. Of these people around 100,000 sustained serious injuries including hip fractures.

In most cases these falls can be avoided or the risk greatly reduced with some simple solutions which makes the person's home safer and easier to navigate. This then gives family more peace of mind that their loved one is safe and comfortable, and means they can remain at home where they are the happiest.

#### Further Advice

These great little easy to implement tips will be of benefit and will greatly reduce the risk of falls in the home. There are, however, many medical conditions that mean a person is at greater risk of falling and medical advice should be sought if a person is falling more often.

If you have concerns regarding a loved one or yourself and need some advice on how to improve mobility with confidence and ease, we are always on the end of the phone to offer any help or advice.

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**Remove Clutter** - Having a clutter free, tidier home means there are fewer obstacles to overcome when going from room to room. This would include ensuring that there are no trailing wires/cables along the floor, that carpets or rugs are well fitted with no holes or fraying. Sometimes, it can be easier to remove rugs altogether, or at least lift them when you are negotiating within that room. Another thing to be aware of is our loveable pets, dogs and cats in particular. As much as we love them, it is wise to ensure they are out of the way just while the person is moving from room to room, they can often get under our feet, especially at meal times, and we wouldn't want to harm ourselves or them!

**Provide plenty of light** - It is just one of those things, that as we get older our eyesight starts to become a cause for concern, so having plenty of light when walking around provides a better visual and potential obstacles are easily spotted. Natural daylight is always the best so having the curtains open during the day is wise. During the evening and night, it is better to use the overhead lights rather than a small lamp, it will avoid shadowing and dark areas.

**Ensure appropriate footwear** - As much as those big fluffy slippers are comfy and cosy, they are not the ideal footwear for older people to move safely around. It is recommended that a solid, non-slip base, with a full back that fits around the feet securely is the right option to reduce the likelihood of falls.

**Encourage light exercise** - It's the old saying, If you don't use it, you lose it! Exercising once in a while can cause us aching muscles and stiff joints, but exercising daily can help to keep us limber and pain free! For older people, it can be easy to get into a routine of not moving around too much as maybe they have stiff joints, arthritis, or just generally feel tired. Doing a little bit of light exercise each day can help to keep joints moving, keep pain to a minimum, and ultimately makes it easier for them to walk around and less likely to feel weak and fall. You can find a really good chair exercising programme sheet, that is printable, at the bottom of this article and we have even included a link to an easy to follow chair exercise class on youtube!

**Use appropriate walking aids** - If a person has been assessed as needing a walking aid, please ensure that they are using the aid whenever they are up and about. This aid will help them to move with ease, and ensure that they are not putting themselves or others at harm. It is a good idea to check the walking aids regularly and if needed get them serviced by the occupational therapist to ensure they are in good working order. If you think a walking aid would be beneficial, but you have not got one, give your GP a call and ask them to refer to the occupational therapist for assessment.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EJgZygWBKaE>