Stay safe at home – prevent a fall

A fall can be serious and lead to loss of confidence and independence. Some tips for your care at home.

See your **doctor** or go to your nearest **emergency department** if you experience any of the following symptoms after discharge from hospital:

- have a headache that gets worse, or will not go away
- feel dizzy or faint
- have blurred vision or slurred speech or you are saying things that don't make sense
- feel increasingly sleepy, restless, confused, agitated, or notice a change in behaviour
- have pain that gets worse, including chest pain
- can't move part of your body, or have increased clumsiness or balance problems
- are feeling sick or vomiting.

Talk to your Doctor or your community health team at your next appointment about:

- feeling weak and/or unsteady on your feet
- how to improve your walking to stay safe
- how to manage long term health problems
- a review of your medications/ tablets
- if you need vitamin D to strengthen your bones
- any eyesight problems
- hearing problems
- any foot pain or problems.

"Staying Active and on Your Feet" booklet includes a health and lifestyle checklist, information on how to get up from a fall and balance and strength exercises to do at home as well as a home safety checklist.

To find a local exercise program and to order a booklet visit: www.activeandhealthy.nsw.gov.au or call 1300 655 957 for a booklet.

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A fall can happen to anyone and can also have serious consequences.
Falls are more common as people get older. Stay safe at home – some tips.

Medication

- Take medicine/tablets as advised
- Talk to your doctor about reviewing your medicine/tablets regularly
- Ask your doctor if your medicines have any side effects
- Keep an up to date list of all your medications for appointments or hospital visits

Hearing and sight

- Wear your glasses and hearing aids as prescribed
- Have your eyesight and hearing checked regularly
- See your doctor if you are concerned

Home safety

- Use hand rails on stairs and in bathrooms and toilets
- Have your home assessed by an Occupational Therapist for special equipment e.g. shower chairs, raised toilet seats etc
- Avoid climbing ladders or on chairs, ask for help where possible
- Have good lighting, inside and outside your home
- At night, keep a night light on or use a sensor light
- Keep your mobile phone handy/wear a personal alarm

Trip/slip hazards

- Remove clutter or things you could trip over at home
- Wipe up spills on the floor straight away
- Remove or secure loose mats
- Be mindful of pets that are nearby
- Ensure outside pathways are clear and power cords and/or hoses are rolled up
- Avoid rushing!
- Use walking aids if advised
- Be careful on uneven surfaces

Footwear

- Wear properly fitted shoes with non-skid soles
- See your doctor or a health professional such as a podiatrist if you have foot pain or health problems that affect your feet

Exercise

- Talk to a physiotherapist or health practitioner about exercises to improve muscle strength and balance
- Visit www.activeandhealthy.nsw.gov.au to find classes in your local area

The CEC's Falls Prevention Program aims to reduce the incidence and severity of falls among older people and reduce the social, psychological and economic impact of falls on individuals, families and the community. For more information please visit www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au or email CEC-Falls@health.nsw.gov.au.

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