

The majority of falls can be prevented. Falls regularly lead to hospital admissions and can potentially have long term implications on your health and wellbeing.

Use the self-assessment tool at www.steadyonyourfeet.com/devon to assess your risk and get your bespoke action plan.

If you cannot access the website, use the checklist below to help inform you of any changes you could make.

Am I at risk of falling?

- I have fallen but I did not tell my GP
- My medication has not been reviewed in a year
- I do not complete 30 min of exercise 5x a week
- I can feel dizzy or light headed
- I struggle to maintain my home
- I wear bifocals or varifocals
- I haven't had my eyes checked in 12 months
- My walkways are not clear to mobilise
- I struggle to get up from the bed/chair
- I don't drink 3pints (1700mls) of fluid a day.
- My slippers are well worn
- I struggle to cut my toe nails
- I have a long term condition
- I save electricity by keeping my lights off
- I drink more alcohol than the GP recommends
- I don't go out much. I worry about falling
- My home is not always warm

Useful websites

Steady on your feet

<https://www.steadyonyourfeet.com/devon>

Equipment advice and buying guides

<https://www.independentlivingcentre.org.uk/>

Age UK

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/exercise/falls-prevention/>

Saga

<https://www.saga.co.uk/magazine/health-wellbeing/wellbeing/five-tips-for-preventing-falls>

NHS

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/falls/prevention/>

Contact us

Okehampton Medical Centre
East Street, Okehampton EX20 1AY
01837 52233

<https://access.klinik.co.uk/contact/okehampton-medical-centre>

Sources

Leaflet produced by: NHS Devon:
d-icb.communications@nhs.net

Exercises from: <https://www.csp.org.uk/public-patient/keeping-active-and-healthy/staying-healthy-you-age/staying-strong-you-age/strength>

Risk of falling list from: <https://www.saga.co.uk/magazine/health-wellbeing/wellbeing/falls-guide>

Images courtesy of The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy:

<https://www.csp.org.uk/publications/get-go-guide-staying-steady-english-version>

<https://www.csp.org.uk/publications/get-go-guide-supplement-six-exercises-staying-steady>

Stay steady on your feet



People over 65 have a 1 in 3 chance of falling this year, and falls can often lead to hospital admissions.

Stay steady on your feet by following this simple and effective guide.

How can I prevent falls?

1. Be organised

Have regularly used items easy to reach so you can avoid bending and stretching.

2. Remove slip and trip hazards

Rugs, wires and clutter all increase your risk of tripping over. Ensure you have good lighting to mobilise, especially at night.

Wipe up spills straight away. Use non-slip mats in the shower.

3. Wear appropriate clothing

Wear well fitting slippers and shoes that have good grip and support. Avoid walking in socks or tights. Avoid long trailing clothes.

4. Stay hydrated

Not drinking enough water can lower your blood pressure and puts you at risk of a urine infection, making you more likely to fall. Aim for 1700ml (3pints) per day, unless your GP has advised otherwise.

Caffeine stimulates your bladder and will mean you need the toilet more often causing you to rush or reduce your fluid intake. Try drinking decaffeinated tea or coffee.

5. Understand your medication

Some medications make you more prone to falls and some react together. Make sure your GP knows of all medications you are taking, even over-the-counter ones.

Helpful exercises

1. Sit to stand

Sit tall near the front of a chair with your feet slightly back. Lean forwards slightly and stand up (with hands on the chair if needed). Step back until your legs touch the chair then slowly lower yourself back into the chair. **Repeat 10 times**



2. Heel raises

Stand tall, holding the back of a sturdy kitchen type chair or kitchen sink, then lift your heels off the floor, taking your weight onto your big toes. Hold for three seconds, then lower with control. **Repeat 10 times**

3. Toe raises

Stand tall holding the same support, then raise your toes – taking your weight on your heels. Don't stick your bottom out. Hold for three seconds, then lower with control. **Repeat 10 times**



4. One leg stand

Stand close to your support and hold it with one hand. Balance on one leg, keeping the support knee soft and your posture upright. Hold the position for 10 seconds. **Repeat on other leg**

4. Heel-toe stand

Stand tall, with one hand on your support. Put one foot directly in front of the other to make a straight line. Look ahead, take your hand off the support and balance for 10 seconds. Take the front foot back to hip-width apart and place the other foot in front. **Balance for 10 seconds**



6. Heel-toe walking

Stand tall, with one hand on a support like a kitchen cabinet. Look ahead and walk 10 steps forwards, placing one foot directly in front of the other so that the feet form a straight line. Aim for a steady walking action.

Take the feet back to hip width apart, turn around and repeat the steps in the other

Important notes

- Make sure the chair you use is sturdy
- Wear supportive shoes
- If you experience chest pain, dizziness or severe shortness of breath, stop and contact a health professional
- Slight soreness the day after is normal

Disclaimer: these activities should not cause any harm. However, they might not be suitable for everyone, particularly those at risk of falls and fractures. Consult a physiotherapist or your GP before starting a new fitness regime, and if you experience pain or discomfort as a result of any of the exercises stop immediately.