

*The risk of falls can be reduced by following the strategies in this brochure.*

*Please contact your medical professional, Occupational Therapist or Physiotherapist if you need further assessment or assistance.*

*Inform your health professional of any falls, stumbles or near misses.*

*Advice available includes how to get up after a fall, suitable exercises and assistive equipment.*

**Further information available on request**

[www.bhps.org.uk/falls/index.html](http://www.bhps.org.uk/falls/index.html)

[www.acc.co.nz](http://www.acc.co.nz)

[www.hqsc.govt.nz/our-programmes/reducing-harm-from-falls/](http://www.hqsc.govt.nz/our-programmes/reducing-harm-from-falls/)



Our namesake  
The Venerable Mary Potter

For further information, or to make a donation,  
please see our website:

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## Falls prevention

## What is a fall?

A fall is when you trip, stumble or slip and end up, without meaning to, on the floor or a lower surface.

Falls happen more often when you have complex medical conditions. A fall can cause reduced mobility and/or ability to manage daily activities.

## Risk of a fall

Three questions can help screen for your falls risk

- Q1. Have you slipped, tripped or fallen in the last year? (Having fallen previously is predictive of falling again).
- Q2. Can you get out of a chair without using the arms? (Balance problems and lower-limb weakness increase the risk of falling).
- Q3. Have you limited or avoided some activities because you are afraid you might lose your balance? (A fear of falling can cause unnecessary restriction of activity, loss of function and diminish quality of life).



## Strategies to help lower risk of a fall

### Personal strategies

- keep your best possible general health and well being
- exercise and mobilise, keep active as much as possible
- stay alert and focused while you are moving
- take your time
- know your limits, ask for help if needed, use equipment or walking aids as prescribed
- wear prescribed aids as needed e.g. glasses, hearing aids
- wear stable well fitting footwear, jandals and scuffs are not recommended
- avoid trailing clothing that could get in the way of your legs and feet
- take note of how things may change for you from day to day

consider the use of a personal alarm.

### Environmental strategies

Make your environment safe to move around in:

- ensure good lighting levels by keeping lights on at all times
- keep your floors dry and clutter free
- keep electrical cords tucked away
- remove rugs that rumple or slide
- install handrails where you need them
- use non-slip mats in wet areas such as the bathroom and shower

- make sure your furniture is a good height for transferring easily and safely on and off
- think carefully about the layout of your house, furniture and belongings and make changes for easier movement
- walk slowly and carefully on uneven surfaces and steps
- take weather conditions into account, for example wind, rain or ice.

### Other

- ask for assistance when required for activities of daily living including personal care and shopping
- consider a medical review for things that may impact on your independence and safety, for example sensory changes (sight, hearing, sensation), pain, fatigue, dizziness, other symptoms and medications.



*good lighting is essential at all times*