



FALLS – THE IMPACT ON OLDER PEOPLE

Having had two nasty falls myself in the last year it has made me very aware of the impact falls can have on elderly people. Falls are the largest cause of emergency hospital admissions for elderly people. Around a third of people aged 65+ and about half of people aged 80+ fall at least once a year. Falling can cause injury, distress, pain, loss of confidence or independence and occasionally death. There are also considerable financial costs associated with falls in terms of local health and care services, as a result of multiple A&E, inpatient stays and an increase in social care services provided.

You may be at risk of falling if you:

- Get dizzy or light headed when you stand or turn
- Have difficulty walking or rising from a low chair or bed
- Have poor balance
- Have fallen before
- Take six or more medicines
- Have a fear of falling
- Suffer from depression or memory problems
- Have poor eyesight or hearing
- Have a cluttered or poorly lit home
- Are not fit and well

What can you do about it?

- Talk to your GP if you have had unexplained falls, feel dizzy or lightheaded, and feel at high risk of falling as many falls can be prevented.

However there are things you can do yourself to reduce the risk:

- Keep active – walking, swimming, dancing, Pilates, and strength and balance exercises.
- Eat well and drink plenty of fluids – preferably water.
- Have your eyes tested annually and see your GP if you have hearing difficulties
- Ask your GP or pharmacist for a medicines review if you are taking 6 or more medicines
- Wear sensible shoes and keep your feet healthy.
- Check your home for hazards – clutter, loose wires or rugs, spillages, pets

If you would like further advice and support please contact us.

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