

Steps you can take to live well and avoid falls





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Falls are not an inevitable part of getting older. There are many ways to reduce your risk of falling. You can start making an action plan today.

This leaflet contains information about the steps you can take to live well and avoid falls.

Always tell your GP or another health professional if you have a fall, as it may be a sign of a new or worsening health condition.





Alcohol

Drinking alcohol frequently significantly increases your risk of a fall.

- ☐ I'm going to cut back on drinking alcohol regularly.
- ☐ If I am concerned, or someone else has expressed concern that I am drinking too much alcohol, I will contact Inclusion Recovery Isle of Wight at 01983 526654.
- ☐ If I require out of hours support, I will contact 0300 330 2001.

Dizziness

There are many possible causes of dizziness, including low blood pressure and inner ear problems.

- ☐ I'm going to speak to my GP practice team to find out why I feel dizzy.
- ☐ I will change my position slowly and move my arms and legs to boost my blood circulation.
- ☐ I will take extra care when getting out of bed and standing up from a chair.
- ☐ I will drink plenty of fluids during the day (unless advised otherwise).
- ☐ I will arrange a hearing test.



Eyesight and hearing

Optimising your eyesight and hearing helps you to adjust to your environment and react to hazards to reduce the risk of falling.


- ☐ If I notice any changes in my vision, I will make an appointment with my optician to discuss my concerns.
- ☐ I will have a standard eye test every two years at my optician or at home if I have a disability or illness.
- ☐ If I notice any changes with my hearing, I will make an appointment to get my ears checked and hearing tested.

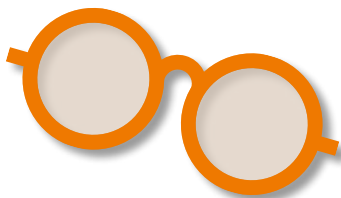
Eye tests are free if you are over 60, and some opticians do home visits if you cannot get out.

If I wear glasses, I will make sure:

- ☐ My glasses are my own.
- ☐ My glasses are the correct prescription.
- ☐ That I clean my glasses on a regular basis.
- ☐ My glasses are comfortable to make the most out of my vision.

Wightsense is a free provider who supports individuals with sight or hearing loss:

 01983 240222.





Healthy diet


Eating a varied and balanced diet is important for maintaining good health.

- ☐ For more information about how to eat well, I will visit the NHS website.

 www.nhs.uk

Isle of Wight community pantries are available as a cost-effective way to top up your weekly shop.

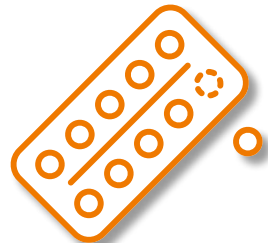
- ☐ For more information on how to join a local pantry, I will visit the community pantries website.

 www.iow.gov.uk/keep-the-island-safe/cost-of-living/household-support-fund/community-pantries/

Medication

Side effects of some medicines may make you more likely to have a fall.

- ☐ I will speak to a medical professional or pharmacist if I think my medicines could be affecting my balance.
- ☐ I will ensure I have my prescription medications reviewed every year.



Foot care

Keeping your feet and footwear in good condition can help you stay steady.

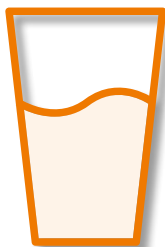
- ☐ I will take care of my feet, including trimming toenails regularly.
- ☐ I will wear well-fitting shoes and slippers that are in good condition and support the ankle.
- ☐ I will visit The Royal College of Podiatry website for more information about how to care for my feet.

 rcpod.org.uk

Staying hydrated

Drinking plenty of fluids helps to maintain a steady blood pressure and boost the health of your bladder.

- ☐ I will drink six to eight glasses of fluid daily unless my medical professional advises otherwise.
- ☐ I will cut down on caffeinated, carbonated, acidic, and alcoholic drinks.
- ☐ I will contact my GP practice team if I have any concerns regarding incontinence.





Physical activity

Maintaining and improving muscle strength and balance can help you live independently and reduce the risk of falls.

- ☐ I will be active every day and do strength and balance activities, such as circuit or resistance training, ball sports, yoga, or tai chi at least twice a week.
- ☐ I will always talk to a fitness instructor first to ensure the class is at the right level for me.
- ☐ I will reduce the time spent sitting.

Maintaining balance and strength as an older adult is essential for general health and fall prevention. Try some of these NHS approved exercises in the comfort of your own home.

When trying these exercises, ensure you have a stable surface to hold for support as needed. If you are at all concerned about starting new exercises or have any worries about your balance, please seek advice from your GP practice team.

There are also several community-based options available where you can go along to join a strength and balance class.

➦ www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/strength-exercises/

➦ www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/physical-activity-guidelines-older-adults/

Health advice for older people

➦ www.iow.gov.uk/keep-the-island-safe/public-health/healthy-living/health-advice-for-older-people/

Exercises for balance

- **Tai Chi**

To improve balance and coordination, practise mild Tai Chi motions.

- **Heel-to-toe walk**

To increase balance, walk in a straight line with one foot in front of the other.

- **Single-leg stand**

Hold onto a stable surface if necessary while standing for a short while on one leg.

Strength training

- **Sit -to-stand**

To strengthen your legs, slowly get up from a chair and sit back down.

- **Wall push-ups**

To strengthen your upper body, perform push-ups against a wall.

Safe home

Many falls occur at home, but some simple actions can reduce the risk.

- ☐ I will check my home for slip and trip hazards such as rugs and wires and remove them where possible.
- ☐ I will arrange a free Safe and Well visit from Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue by calling 023 8064 4000.
- ☐ I will have a phone by the bed in case of emergency.
- ☐ I will make sure all rooms and staircases are well-lit.
- ☐ I will put a light by the bed if I need to get up at night.
- ☐ If I am concerned that the walking aid I am using is not right for me I will ask a healthcare professional for advice.
- ☐ If I use a stick/crutch I will check the ferrule (rubber) on the bottom regularly to check it is not worn.
- ☐ I will use non-slip mats in the bathroom.
- ☐ I will plan an exit route in case of emergency.

Some people are eligible for adaptations in their home to help prevent a fall.

- ☐ I am going to contact my local council on 01983 821000 for more information and advice.






Additional useful information

Age UK Isle of Wight

Age UK offers free digital support services, The Good Neighbour scheme, information, and advice for over 50s, help around the home, and welfare benefits advice.

 01983 525282


Alzheimer's Café

For more information about accessing support for anyone who may have received a dementia diagnosis or looking for guidance or signposting to other services.

 www.alzheimercafeiow.org.uk


Blue Lamp Trust

A free service offering support at home with safety and security.

 0300 777 0157


Carers IW

Carers IW can support individuals who may require support on how to access a disabled blue badge, occupational therapy, and the independent living skills assessment.

 01983 533173

Citizens Advice

Citizens Advice Isle of Wight is an independent charity which provides free, impartial, confidential advice for anyone that needs it.

 0344 411 1444 or 01983 823898

Community Stores

For more information about items which can be loaned short term or for information on how to get your walking stick checked, contact the community equipment service.

☎ 01983 528334

✉ ces@iow.gov.uk

Mountbatten

Mountbatten provides outpatient care through the John Cheverton Centre in Newport. The building is the location of many of the groups and activities which Mountbatten provides. For more information, visit the Mountbatten Isle of Wight website.

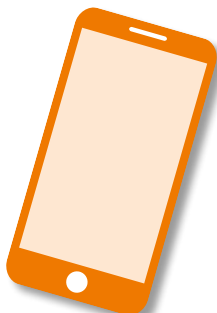
📌 www.mountbatten.org.uk


Wightcare

A service provided by the Isle of Wight Council offering services to those who may need additional support at home. They provide a 24-hour service including a community alarm, Telecare, and Tele check service.

☎ 01983 821105

📌 www.iow.gov.uk/wightcare





If you have difficulty understanding this document, please contact us on 01983 821000 and we will do our best to help you.

