

# STEADY ON YOUR FEET

Cheshire



Falls Prevention Information Pack

# Information & Advice



## Information and Advice

### Falls

If you experience a fall, it's important to consult your GP or a health professional. This will help to identify potential causes and receive appropriate care.

#### Gathering Information About Falls

The more details you can recall about a fall, the easier it is to pinpoint a cause. Take some time to reflect on the following things:

- **When it happened:** Note the time of day and your activities leading up to the fall. Was there anything specific you were doing at that moment?
- **How it happened:** Try to remember whether it was a loss of balance, tripping on an object, feeling dizzy, or having a blackout. These details can be useful in working out why it happened.
- **Where it happened:** Consider the location of the fall. Are there any potential trip hazards that can be removed? Be particularly aware of this if you have fallen in the same place more than once.

#### Multiple Risk Factors

Falls often result from a combination of risk factors. Common contributors and tips to reduce them include:

- **Muscle weakness:** Strengthening exercises can help make your muscles stronger
- **Poor balance:** Balance exercises can help you feel more stable when moving around
- **Dizziness:** Consult a health professional to identify the cause of dizziness and receive appropriate treatment.
- **Environmental hazards:** Remove or address potential trip hazards in your home to create a safer environment.
- **Vision and hearing problems:** Regular eye and ear check-ups can find issues early and allow for appropriate treatments.
- **Foot issues:** Foot pain, deformities, or numbness can be addressed with proper footwear and foot care.
- **Footwear:** Make sure that your shoes are supportive, comfortable, and fit well
- **Memory loss or confusion:** Keeping your brain healthy is essential. Stay mentally active with puzzles and brain exercises and consult a health professional if you're noticing memory changes
- **Poor nutrition:** A balanced diet can support overall health and reduce the risk of falls.
- **Dehydration:** Dehydration can lead to dizziness and falls. Make sure you are drinking enough water throughout the day, especially in hot weather.
- **Medications:** Review your medications with a health professional to minimise side effects that may contribute to falls.
- **Bladder and bowel difficulties:** Problems such as urgency can increase the risk of falls. Speak to a health professional for advice or support.
- **Alcohol consumption:** Limit alcohol intake, as drinking can affect balance and coordination.

## The Confidence Factor

Experiencing a fall can affect your confidence, potentially leading to a cycle of reduced activity and an increased risk of falls. Being proactive is essential, even if you haven't yet had a fall. This approach helps you to take control of your situation, enabling you to remain active and independent for longer, with an improved quality of life in the long run.

improved quality

## Links and Resources

To learn more about falls, explore the following resources or develop your personal action plan:

[NHS UK: Falls Overview and Prevention](#)

[Steady On Your Feet: Self Assessment Tool](#)

[Cheshire East Live Well Falls Prevention Information](#)

[Cheshire West and Chester Live Well Falls Prevention Information](#)

## Blackouts

Identifying the causes of blackouts is important for keeping you safe and well.

### Recognising Blackouts

Blackouts can sometimes be challenging to identify, particularly when they are brief. However, it's essential to suspect a blackout if:

- You fell and cannot remember what happened
- You have injuries to your face, indicating that you may not have had a chance to put your hands out to save yourself

### Common Causes of Blackouts

Blackouts become more common as we age, and they can result from a number of things, including:

- **Drop in blood pressure:** A sudden drop in blood pressure, often experienced when changing position (e.g., standing up from a chair)
- **Heart disorders:** Certain heart conditions or irregularities in heart rhythm
- **Anxiety, panic attacks, or stress:** Emotional factors such as anxiety, panic attacks, or stress can trigger blackouts in some individuals

### Taking Action

If you suspect that you may have had a blackout, it's essential to tell your GP as soon as possible. This will help with finding the cause and choosing the right treatment to prevent future episodes.

### Preventing Blackouts and Staying Safe

There are some practical steps you can take to reduce the risk of having a blackout, including:

- **Stay well-hydrated:** Dehydration can affect your blood pressure, so make sure you drink enough water
- **Sit or stand up slowly:** When changing positions, do so slowly to minimise sudden changes in blood pressure
- **Manage stress and anxiety:** Consider techniques such as relaxation exercises, mindfulness, or counselling to address emotional triggers
- **Follow your GP's recommendations:** If you have a medical condition contributing to blackouts, follow your doctor's advice and treatment plan

Remember, addressing the potential causes of blackouts can help you stay safe and maintain your overall well-being. By seeking medical guidance and taking preventive measures, you can reduce the risk of blackouts and enjoy a healthier and more active life.

### Links and Resources

To find out more about blackouts and fainting, explore the following resources or develop your personal action plan use our Self-Assessment Tool:

[Steady On Your Feet: Self Assessment Tool](#)

NHS UK: Fainting

## Dizziness

### Common Causes of Dizziness

Identifying the possible causes of dizziness is an important part of finding the right treatment. Dizziness can be related to several things, including:

#### **Drop in Blood Pressure**

A sudden drop in blood pressure is often experienced when changing position (e.g., standing up from a chair). To minimise the risk:

- Change position slowly
- Move your arms and legs around before getting up
- Sit back down if you feel dizzy and wait until it passes
- Stand still or walk on the spot when you first get up, avoiding sudden movements

#### **Dehydration**

Not drinking enough fluid can contribute to dizziness. To stay well hydrated:

- Drink plenty of fluids throughout the day (aim for 6-8 cups)
- Sip water regularly
- Limit caffeine and alcohol consumption, as they can lead to dehydration

#### **Inner Ear Disorders and Vertigo**

If you experience a sensation that the world is moving or spinning, or if dizziness is accompanied by nausea, vomiting, visual changes, or hearing disturbances, it may be a sign of inner ear issues. Consider the following steps:

- Contact your GP surgery for further advice and assessment
- Make sure you have had a recent hearing test.

#### **Medications**

Dizziness can be a side effect of some medications, especially those you take for high blood pressure. If you experience dizziness while taking medication:

- Consult your GP or a community pharmacist for potential adjustments to your medication prescription

#### **Underlying Medical Conditions (e.g., Diabetes, COPD)**

Certain medical conditions may increase the likelihood of dizziness.

- Make sure that any medical conditions are it is well-managed through regular check-ups
- If you think your medical condition may be causing dizziness, consult your GP or a health professional
- Mention to your health professional if you have had one or more falls.

## **Anxiety**

Stress and anxiety can contribute to dizziness. To ease symptoms:

- Try relaxation techniques like mindfulness or deep breathing exercises.
- If symptoms persist or are severe, discuss them with your GP for further guidance.

### Links and Resources

To find out more about dizziness, explore the following resources or develop your personal action plan:

[Steady On Your Feet: Self Assessment Tool](#)

[NHS UK: Dizziness Information](#)



## Medication

If you are taking four or more medications, the risk of falls can further increase.

### Regular Medication Reviews

It's very important to have your medications reviewed regularly by your GP or pharmacist. Make sure you let them know if you have fallen over recently. These professionals can monitor your medications for any potential side effects that might increase your falls risk and change the prescription if necessary. This becomes especially important as we age since our response to medicines can change, and dosages may need to be modified.

### Following Medication Instructions

Taking your medications as prescribed by your GP is vital to their effectiveness. Be mindful of specific instructions, such as taking them at a certain time of day, on an empty stomach, or with food. If you have any questions or concerns about your medications, don't hesitate to consult your pharmacist or a health professional.

### Interactions and Considerations

It's important to be aware of potential interactions between your medications and other substances, such as alcohol or over-the-counter drugs. These interactions can make your medications less effective or lead to side effects. Here are some tips to consider:

- **Alcohol:** Be cautious when consuming alcohol while taking medications, as it can interact with certain drugs. It's advisable to discuss alcohol consumption with a health professional
- **Over-the-counter medications:** Inform your pharmacist about any over-the-counter medications or supplements you plan to take, as they can interact with prescription drugs

### Pharmacist Support

Remember that your pharmacist can be a valuable resource to talk about medications and possible side effects, and any concerns you might have. They can also provide guidance on your medication dosages, potential interactions, and proper usage.

### Links and Resources

To read more about the services a pharmacist can provide, follow the link below:

[NHS UK: How Your Pharmacy Can Help](#)

[Steady On Your Feet: Self-Assessment Tool](#)

## Environment

Slips, trips, and falls in the home are common, and may be related to:

- **Daily activities:** Everyday tasks like getting in and out of bed or the bath, and getting on or off a chair or the toilet, can become challenging as we age, increasing the risk of falls
- **Home hazards:** Hazards such as loose rugs, cluttered walkways, inadequate lighting, and slippery floors, can all lead to falls

### Preventing Falls in and Around the Home

Falls prevention in and around the home often relies on "common sense," but it's not always easy to identify potential dangers. Our home safety section is designed to help you:

- **Identify hazards:** Discover potential slip, trip and fall hazards within your home. Learn how to spot risks like loose rugs, slippery surfaces, and poor lighting.
- **Take action:** Find practical tips and step-by-step instructions on how to remove or reduce these hazards to create a safer living environment.

### Links and Resources

For detailed guidance on identifying and minimising home hazards, visit our home safety section or explore the other resources:

[Steady On Your Feet: Home Safety Resources](#)

[NHS Inform: Preventing Falls by Identifying Hazards at Home](#)

## Movement and Exercise

### The Impact of Ageing

Between the ages of 50 and 70, it's natural to experience a decline of about 30% in muscle strength. As we age, our balance reaction times also slow down, making it harder to maintain stability, especially during faster movements. Physical inactivity can also lead to weaker bones and a higher risk of fractures.

### The Power of Exercise

Strength and balance exercise programmes are highly effective in preventing falls, regardless of age. These classes can help make everyday tasks like getting up and down stairs, boarding buses, or walking on uneven surfaces easier and safer.

### Find strength and balance exercise classes local to you

### Getting Started

Remember that “physical activity” includes any movement that increases your heart rate and breathing.

While exercising is safe and beneficial for most people, it's essential to listen to your body. If you experience chest pain or feel faint during exercise, stop immediately and consult your doctor.

If you're new to exercise, start slowly and progressively increase your activity level. Aim for:

- Physical activity on most days, adding up to 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise each week (e.g., walking, swimming, cycling).
- Strengthening exercises 2-3 times per week (e.g., gym workouts, carrying heavy bags, yoga).
- Activities that challenge your balance 2-3 times per week (e.g., tai chi, bowls, dancing).

Even small steps count, such as breaking up long periods of sitting with short walks around the house or doing exercises while seated. However, please note that chair-based exercises, while beneficial for many aspects of health, do not effectively prevent falls. Exercises must challenge your balance to be effective.

If you're unsure about which activities are best for you or you need personalised guidance, consider consulting a physiotherapist or a qualified exercise professional. They can provide tailored advice to help you make the most of your physical activity routine.

### Links and Resources

To learn more about physical activity and discover exercise ideas and local services, visit our “Staying Active” section or explore the other resources:

### Steady On Your Feet: Staying Active

### **Cheshire East Exercise Classes**

FREE Strength & Balance Falls Prevention Exercise Classes: Stand Strong

Everybody Health Strength & Balance Classes: Be Steady Be Safe

Healthy living services: One You

Live Well: Keeping active – local services

### **Cheshire West & Chester Exercise Classes**

FREE Strength & Balance Exercise Falls Prevention Classes: Brio

Healthy living services: Cheshire Change Hub

Live Well: Be active – local services

### **NHS UK Guidelines**

NHS UK: Physical Activity Guidelines for Older Adults

## Vision

It's important to be aware of potential changes in our vision and take proactive steps to address them.

### Understanding Age-Related Changes in Vision

As we grow older, we may not always notice gradual changes in our vision. However, ageing can affect our ability to adapt to different lighting conditions, distinguish colours, and accurately perceive depth and distance. These changes can pose challenges, especially for individuals who wear bifocals or varifocals. If you wear these types of lenses, take extra care when navigating steps, stairs, or uneven surfaces. See your Optician for advice on the most appropriate glasses for you.

### The Importance of Regular Eye Tests

With advancing age, certain eye conditions become more prevalent, including cataracts, glaucoma, and macular degeneration. It's essential to recognise that many of these visual problems are correctable.

Regular eye examinations are essential for maintaining good vision and preventing falls. These tests not only assess your vision but also help detect and manage eye conditions early. Be aware of the following:

- Eye tests are free for individuals aged 60 or over
- If you have difficulty going out, many opticians offer home visits where needed

### Additional Resources for Eye Health

To learn more about eye health, explore the following resources:

[Cheshire East Live Well: Sight loss local support services](#)

[Cheshire West and Chester: Sensory impairment information](#)

[Age UK: Eye Health information and Advice](#)

[NHS UK: Find an Optician Near You](#)

[Royal National Institute of Blind People \(RNIB\): Eye Health](#)

## Memory

### Understanding Memory Changes with Age

Memory issues, including memory loss, confusion, and difficulties in problem-solving, can develop gradually as we grow older. These changes may be associated with ageing itself or influenced by various things such as:

- **Stress:** High levels of stress can impact memory and cognitive function
- **Sleep:** Poor sleep quality or not enough sleep can affect memory
- **Infections:** Certain infections may temporarily affect cognitive abilities
- **Medications:** Some medications can have cognitive side effects
- **Dementia:** Dementia is associated with significant cognitive decline
- **Substance Use:** Excessive consumption or withdrawal from drugs or alcohol can impair memory and cognitive function

*‘Cognitive’ is a term used to describe anything related to thinking, learning, and understanding.*

### Managing Memory Challenges

For individuals experiencing minor memory issues, there are strategies that can help maintain cognitive function:

- **Brain Stimulation:** Engaging in puzzles, games, and mental exercises can help keep your brain active.
- **Visual Prompts:** Using visual reminders, lists, and calendars can aid memory and organisation.

However, more severe memory problems may affect judgement, reasoning, and insight, which can lead to risky behaviour and falls. These challenges can also affect our senses such as sight, sound, and touch, which may result in communication and mobility difficulties.

### Seeking Professional Guidance

If you or your loved ones have noticed a significant change in your memory or behaviour, it is essential to discuss these concerns with your GP or another health professional. Early recognition and assessment of potential cognitive changes can help to prevent adverse outcomes.

### Links and Resources

To learn more about memory and cognitive health, explore the following resources:

[Cheshire East Live Well: Living with Dementia](#)

[Cheshire West and Chester: Services and factsheets for Dementia](#)

[NHS UK: Memory Loss Information](#)

[Age UK: Dementia Resources](#)

## Nutrition and Hydration

Unintentional weight loss is not a normal part of ageing. If you find yourself losing weight without a clear reason, it's essential to consult your GP, as it could be a sign of an underlying medical condition.

### The Impact of Nutrition and Hydration

Poor nutrition can lead to a weakened immune system, difficulty in absorbing medications, impaired wound healing, and weaker muscles and bones. These factors can contribute to an increased risk of falls. Even if your weight falls within a normal range, consuming a limited variety of foods may result in malnourishment.

Hydration is just as important, as water makes up two-thirds of our body and is essential for digestion and flushing out toxins. Dehydration can lead to a number of issues, including headaches, confusion, dizziness, constipation, and urinary tract / water infections. All of these can increase the risk of falls. Signs of dehydration may include:

- Feeling thirsty
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Dry mouth or lips
- Confusion
- Dark or foul-smelling urine
- Constipation

### Assessing Your Diet and Fluid Intake

If you are uncertain about the quality of your diet or whether you are drinking enough fluids, consider keeping a food and drink diary and compare it to the following guidelines:

- Aim for 2-3 portions of high-protein foods every day, such as meat, fish, eggs, nuts, beans, pulses, soya, tofu, and other meat-free protein sources
- Include 2-3 portions of dairy foods daily, such as cheese, milk, yoghurt, or non-dairy alternatives like soya, almond, or coconut milk
- Include a serving of starchy food at each meal, such as bread, cereals, potatoes, pasta, or rice
- Consume a variety of fruits and vegetables daily, whether fresh, frozen, tinned, dried, or juiced
- If you enjoy fish, prioritise oily options like mackerel, salmon, herring, trout, pilchards, or sardines, as they are rich in omega-3 fatty acids. Aim for 2 portions a week.
- Maintain proper hydration by drinking at least 6-8 glasses or mugs of fluids every day. Keep caffeine intake low, as it can worsen dehydration

### Overcoming Dietary Challenges

There are various reasons why your diet may not be as nutritious as it should be, including a reduced appetite, swallowing difficulties, trouble sourcing or preparing food, illness, or dental health issues. If you struggle with shopping or meal preparation, reach out to family and friends who may be able to assist or consider using meal or grocery delivery services. If daily activities – including meal preparation – become challenging, you can contact social services for potential assistance.

## Diabetes Considerations

If you have diabetes, it's important to consult your GP, nurse, or dietitian before making any significant dietary changes.

## Links and Resources

To find out more about nutrition and healthy eating, explore these resources:

### **Cheshire East**

[Live Well: Healthy eating information](#)

[One You: Weight management support](#)

### **Cheshire West and Chester**

[Healthy eating information \(Eat Well Be Active\)](#)

[Cheshire Change Hub: Be healthy information](#)

[Cheshire Change Hub: Weight management support](#)

### **NHS Resources**

[NHS UK: Eat Well](#)

[Age UK: Healthy Eating](#)



## Bone Health

Some people also develop a condition called osteoporosis, which leads to reduced bone density and an increased risk of fractures.

### Understanding Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is a condition characterised by decreased bone density, making bones more likely to fracture, even from minor bumps or falls. It is more common in women, particularly after menopause when bone loss tends to accelerate. It is also more common amongst people from certain ethnic backgrounds, such as Caucasian and Asian. Several factors can increase the likelihood of developing osteoporosis:

- **Previous bone fractures:** If you've experienced a bone fracture following a minor incident or fall and you're over 50
- **Low BMI:** Having a low body weight / body mass index (BMI) can contribute to the development of osteoporosis
- **Family history:** A family history of osteoporosis or hip fractures
- **Smoking and alcohol:** Current smoking and heavy alcohol consumption (more than 3 units per day)
- **Oral corticosteroids:** Taking oral corticosteroids, such as prednisolone, for more than 3 months
- **Rheumatoid arthritis:** Having a diagnosis of rheumatoid arthritis
- **Certain medical conditions:** Conditions like Type I diabetes, untreated hyperthyroidism, chronic malnutrition/malabsorption, and chronic liver disease
- **Premature menopause:** Experiencing menopause before the age of 45 without hormone replacement therapy (HRT)

### Taking Steps for Strong Bones

Regardless of whether you have osteoporosis or not, you can take steps to promote and maintain strong bones:

- **Quit smoking:** Smoking can harm the bone-building cells in your body, making it important to kick the habit
- **Limit alcohol intake:** Excessive alcohol consumption can damage bones and affect balance
- **Engage in weight-bearing exercise:** Participate in exercises that involve moderate impact to support bone health, such as jogging, jumping, or stamping, to support bone health
- **Consult a professional:** If you've had a prior fracture or are diagnosed with osteoporosis, consult with your physiotherapist or the Royal Osteoporosis Society for guidance on suitable exercises
- **Ensure adequate vitamin D:** Vitamin D is essential for bone health, and sunlight is a primary source. However, in the UK, it's advisable to take vitamin D supplements, particularly during the winter months or if you have limited outdoor exposure. These supplements are readily available in supermarkets and pharmacies.
- **Include calcium in your diet:** Aim for a daily calcium intake of 1000mg by including calcium-rich foods into your diet (e.g. milk, cheese, yoghurt)

### Links and Resources

To explore further information about bone health and osteoporosis, visit:

[The Royal Osteoporosis Society: Information and Support](#)



### Foot Care for Independence

Being aware of and keeping an eye out for possible foot health concerns can help you to identify problems earlier on, allowing you to seek support before they become a bigger issue. It's important to wash and dry your feet well, and regularly check for any new concerns, such as corns & calluses, overgrown or in-grown toenails, bunions, or sore areas.

One simple step you can take to maintain your foot health is trimming your toenails. Doing so after bathing, when they are softer, can make the process more manageable.

### Professional Foot Care

If you are unsure about the best way to care for your feet or have specific foot concerns, consider consulting a podiatrist or chiropodist. They are trained professionals who can provide expert guidance on foot care and address any issues you may be experiencing. This is particularly important for individuals with diabetes, as foot complications can be more severe in this group.

### Choosing the Right Footwear

The type of footwear you choose can significantly impact your comfort and stability. Here are some recommendations:

- Choose shoes that provide protection and support for your feet. Look for non-slip soles that are not overly thick.
- Avoid high-heeled, backless, or loose-fitting footwear as they can increase the risk of tripping and cause instability.

### Links and Resources

To find a podiatrist in your area, explore the following resources:

[NHS UK: Find a Podiatrist](#)

[Royal College of Podiatry: Ageing Feet](#)

## Bladder and Bowel

Being proactive by staying hydrated, eating a balanced diet, and seeking professional guidance if needed, can help to reduce the risk of falls associated with bladder and bowel problems.

### Bladder and Bowel Challenges That Increase the Risk of Falls

Certain bladder and bowel problems may elevate the risk of falls:

- **Strong urge to urinate:** Rushing to the toilet due to a sudden and strong urge to urinate can make you more likely to stumble or fall
- **Urine / water infections:** Infections in the urinary tract can cause discomfort and confusion and affect mobility
- **Frequent urination:** Passing urine more than 10 times in 24 hours or having to visit the toilet more than twice during the night can disrupt your sleep and increase falls risk
- **Constipation:** Experiencing hard bowel movements and opening your bowels less than three times a week can lead to discomfort and contribute to falls
- **Diarrhoea:** Urgent and loose bowel movements can lead to quick and sometimes unsteady movements and also cause dehydration

These issues may be aggravated by factors such as dehydration and excessive consumption of caffeine or alcohol. You can take proactive measures to support your bladder and bowel health:

- Aim to drink 6 to 8 cups of fluids daily, but minimise drinks containing caffeine or alcohol.
- Maintain a balanced diet rich in fibre, including wholegrain bread, cereals, peas, beans, fruits, and vegetables, to alleviate constipation.
- If you experience nighttime difficulties accessing the toilet, consider using a commode or urinal by the bed for convenience.

### Seeking Professional Guidance

If you encounter ongoing issues related to your bladder or bowel health, it's essential to speak with your GP. They can refer for a continence assessment and offer further support or guidance tailored to your needs.

### Pelvic Floor Exercises for Additional Support

To strengthen your pelvic floor muscles and enhance bladder and bowel control, consider incorporating pelvic floor exercises into your routine. These exercises can be particularly beneficial for women.

### Links and Resources

For more information on pelvic floor exercises, explore the following resource:

[East Cheshire Bladder and Bowel Service information](#)

[Mid Cheshire Bladder and Bowel Service information](#)

[West Cheshire Continence and Urology Service information](#)

NHS UK: Pelvic Floor Exercises

## Fear of Falling

### Breaking the Cycle of Fear

Falls can happen to anyone, and you are certainly not alone – they are more common than you'd think. It's essential to recognise that the more fear and anxiety you feel, the less likely you are to remain physically active. Being less active can lead to weaker muscles, reduced balance, and a higher risk of having future falls.

You may find yourself walking more cautiously, slowing down your pace, or even feeling nervous to leave your home. These are common reactions and often signal a decrease in your confidence in moving around and getting out and about.

### Creating a Falls Plan

It's advisable to have a plan in place for if you fall. This can significantly reduce anxiety and minimise the likelihood of prolonged periods on the floor.

If you are on the floor hurt or unable to get up, consider these steps:

- **Summon help:** If you are hurt or unable to get up, use your pendant alarm, mobile phone, call out for assistance, crawl to a telephone, or make noise by banging on a wall or radiator
- **Stay warm:** Make sure you have blankets and a cushion that are accessible from floor level, to help you stay warm and comfortable while waiting for help
- **Move safely:** If you are able, move to a softer surface and change your position regularly

If you find yourself unhurt and capable of getting up after a fall:

- **Roll over:** Roll over onto your hands and knees
- **Crawl to support:** Crawl to a stable piece of furniture, such as an armchair, to assist you in getting up
- **Take your time:** Turn and sit on a chair or bed to rest for a while



### Assistive Devices for Added Security

If you worry about falling when you are alone at home, consider using a pendant alarm that enables you to call for help, even if you can't reach the telephone. There are also telecare sensors available, such as falls detectors, designed for individuals who may not be able to press a pendant alarm. There are lots of different pendant alarm and telecare providers, which can be found by searching online.

### Rebuilding Your Confidence and Reducing Your Risk

Keep in mind these essential points:

- Try not to let having a fall worry you too much. Many steps can be taken to minimise the risk of it happening again
- If your worries continue, consider talking to someone you trust about your feelings
- Set achievable goals to gradually regain your confidence and return to your usual activities. For example,

start by walking short distances before progressing to longer ones

- If you are worried to complete a particular activity, think about all of the times you have done that activity successfully, instead of focusing on a previous fall

There are a number of steps you can take to reduce your risk of falling and rebuild your confidence. A great starting point is using the [Self-Assessment tool](#) available on our website. This tool can help you identify areas where you can make changes and improvements to feel safer.

#### Links and Resources

Complete your [Self-Assessment](#) today and explore the following resources for more information:

[Steady On Your Feet: Self Assessment Plan](#)

[NHS Inform: Fear of Falling](#)

If you would like some support to increase your activity levels, consider contacting your local Social Prescribing service through your GP.

[NHS: What is Social Prescribing?](#)

[Cheshire East: Social Prescribing information](#)

[Cheshire West and Chester: Social Prescribing and Wellbeing information](#)

## Sleep and Falls

### What I can do

- Limit your daytime sleep
- Be as active as you can during the day
- Have a set bedtime routine
- Milky drinks before bedtime may help
- Tea and coffee later in the day are likely to keep you awake. Try switching to decaffeinated versions of your favourite drinks
- Play relaxing music you enjoy or that is especially good for relaxation before going to bed
- Try not to worry about the things you cannot change

It is important to sleep in bed whenever possible. This helps to improve circulation, prevent sore skin, reduce swelling in limbs, and ensure all muscles in the body are relaxed.

Sleeping pills are a common risk factor for falls, especially if you find yourself falling in the night or in the morning. If you are on regular sleeping pills, you may wish to speak to your GP about this.

Fatigue and boredom can also affect how alert we feel, which can increase falls risk. Keep to a good routine and try to keep your mind active by doing crosswords, reading the paper etc. Avoid sleeping for too long during the day, and pace yourself to manage fatigue.

### Rolling out of bed

If you are rolling out of bed, consider;

- Changing the side of bed you sleep on, or sleep more centrally in the bed.
- Speak to your GP if you're taking sleeping tablets or sedatives
- Place a small towel under the edge of the fitted sheet to create a small barrier to alert you to being near the edge of the bed.
- Elevate the edge of the mattress

If you are falling from the bed when you are trying to get in or out, consider:

- Adapting the height of the bed- if it is too low it might be easy to get in, but harder to get out
- If the bed is too high- it will be hard to get in, and you may 'slide' off. Remove casters, or invest in a shallower mattress
- The sheets are too slippery
- The edge of the mattress is too soft
- Bed handles to assist with your bed transfer. Speak to occupational therapy or other health professionals for advice

# Home Safety





## Home Safety

### Moving Around Outside

Navigating the outdoor areas around your home, including paths, steps and the garden, requires attention to safety.

Navigating the outdoor areas around your home, including paths, steps and the garden, requires attention to safety.

Here are some tips to help you identify hazards and outdoor areas of your home:

#### **Clear pathways**

Are your paths clear of leaves and overgrown plants? Maintaining tidy outdoor areas, free of obstacles, is essential for safety. Regularly clear away leaves and trim overgrown plants to keep pathways clear.

#### **Slippery surfaces**

Are your paving stones free of moss and algae? If not, this can become slippery when wet. Prune overhanging plants and branches to improve lighting. You can purchase products to remove algae or get help from someone to do it with a pressure washer.

#### **Uneven or broken paving**

Do you have any uneven or broken paving slabs? These can be trip hazards. Arrange for someone to replace or straighten them to make sure your walking surface is level.

#### **Gardening considerations**

Are your flower beds at ground level? They'll be easier to access if they're in containers or raised beds. When you are in the garden, avoid spending too much time in one position and be cautious when standing up from a bent-over position as this may cause dizziness.

#### **Entry steps**

Do you have steps to get in and out of the property? Consider installing an additional step, grab rails, or a ramp depending on your needs, to increase stability and safety. If you're concerned about accessing your property, seek professional advice or assessment to help identify a solution.

#### **Walking aids**

If you use a walking aid, do you have an appropriate one to use outdoors? Wheeled zimmer frames are not safe for outdoor use. If a walking stick does not provide enough support, consider an outdoor walker such as a 3- or 4-wheeled walker. These are available for purchase from mobility shops or the

Internet.

For adaptations and other solutions, consider speaking to organisations specialising in home or garden modifications or social services. Their expertise can help ensure your outdoor area is safe and functional.

To find a local handyman or gardener, who can fit solutions or help with external areas around your home, contact your local council.

Links and Resources

### **Home Adaptations:**

Contact your local Handyperson Service for support with minor adaptations such as additional handrails:

Cheshire East Handyperson Service: Orbitas

Cheshire West and Chester Handyperson Service: Homekey+

### **Managing at Home:**

For further assessment, if you are struggling to manage around your home, contact Social Services:

#### **Cheshire East:**

- Request an assessment from Adult Social Care by telephoning **0300 123 5010**
- For more information on Social Care Assessments, [view social care assessments website](#)
- Visit the [Choices for Care webpage](#) to complete an online form and identify the support you may need

#### **Cheshire West and Chester:**

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- Complete a [Self-Assessment](#) to establish your support needs, and submit your answers to the Community Access Team for a call back

If you feel you are struggling to manage at home due to changes in your mobility, contact your GP surgery and ask to be referred for assessment for rehabilitation.

### **Fire Safety:**

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Download the Cheshire Fire & Rescue Safe and Well Booklet for more information about reducing the risk of fire in your home

Cheshire Fire & Rescue Safe and Well Booklet

## Fire Safety

- Store wheelie bins and rubbish securely away from property.
- Bring bins back in as soon as possible after rubbish collection.

## Moving Around Inside

Safely navigating your way around your home is essential for preventing falls. With our assistance, you can identify and address hazards, reducing falls risk.

Safely navigating your way around your home is essential for preventing falls. With our assistance, you can identify and address hazards, reducing falls risk.

Here are some tips to help you identify hazards and optimise safety inside your home:

### **Adequate lighting**

Are staircases and landings well lit? It's important to have enough light to spot any potential hazards. Make sure that light switches are easily accessible; two-way switches can help with this. You can seek the support of a handyperson to help if needed.

### **Stairway stability**

If you have stairs, do you feel safe and steady when using them? Always use the handrail, and consider installing a second one if you need more support. A local handyperson can assist with this if needed. Consider minimising journeys up and down the stairs if you're feeling unsteady or tired. If you use a walking frame, make sure you have one on each level, as it is not safe to carry these on the stairs.

### **Clear pathways**

Throughout the house, it's important to create enough space to move around and access all of the rooms freely without obstacles in the way. Keep your pathways clear by rearranging furniture and removing any clutter and seek assistance if needed. If you have a walking aid, always use it as instructed.

### **Floor hazards**

Objects like papers, magazines, books, shoes, boxes, blankets, towels, or other items on the floor are all potential trip hazards. It's important to keep the floor clear of items such as these. Consider using a 'helping hand' tool to reduce stooping or overreaching if needed.

### **Cord and wire management**

Do you have to walk over or around cords or wires, such as those from lamps, extension leads, or telephones? These can cause you to trip, and it's important that they are tucked away and secured down. If needed, consult an electrician to install additional sockets. For fire safety, consider a home safety check from your local fire brigade, which can provide advice and fit smoke alarms if required.

### **Letterbox convenience**

Do you have a letterbox cage to avoid stooping to pick up letters? Installing one is an easy solution that not only saves you from stooping but also prevents papers from spreading across the floor just inside the doorway. You can find these at DIY stores or online, and a local handyperson can assist with

installation if needed.

### **Loose rugs**

Loose rugs or runners can be a big trip hazard, particularly if they move on the floor or have curled edges. The safest option is to remove these altogether. However, at the very least these should be taped down or secured with a non-slip mat underneath.

### **Calling for assistance**

If you fall, do you have a plan for calling for assistance? This is particularly important if you live by yourself. It's a sensible idea to carry a mobile phone or have a landline telephone that you can reach from floor level. A pendant alarm is another reliable option, as you can wear this on your wrist or around your neck.

### **Carpet condition**

Are your carpets in good condition and not frayed? Worn carpets are a significant fall risk and should either be replaced or secured as soon as possible.

### **Making Adaptations**

For adaptations and other solutions, including handrails, consider speaking to organisations specialising in home modifications or social services. Their expertise can help ensure your home is a safe and functional space.

Links and Resources

### **Home Adaptations:**

Contact your local Handyperson Service for support with minor adaptations such as additional handrails:

[Cheshire East Handyperson Service: Orbitas](#)

[Cheshire West and Chester Handyperson Service: Homekey+](#)

### **Managing at Home:**

For further assessment, if you are struggling to manage around your home, contact Social Services:

#### **Cheshire East:**

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## **Fire Safety**

- Make sure you have a working smoke alarm on each level of your home and test it regularly.
- For support with fire and smoke alarms, as well as specialist alarms for sensory loss, contact your local fire brigade.
- Have an escape plan in case of fire, make sure exit routes are not blocked and keys are to hand.
- If people in the home need assistance to exit, then make sure this is considered.

## Sensory Support

Navigating a home safely is essential for everyone, especially for those with sensory impairments.

Navigating a home safely is essential for everyone, especially for those with sensory impairments such as hearing or visual difficulties. Vision and hearing are both very important in helping you to move around safely. Vision plays a vital role in maintaining your balance, and hearing allows you to have a better awareness of your surroundings.

Here are some tips to help you create a safe environment tailored to the needs of those who have sensory impairments:

### **Good Lighting**

For individuals with visual impairments, proper lighting is vital. Choose bright fluorescent bulbs to make sure there is enough light throughout the home.

### **Consistent Lighting Levels**

Maintain uniform lighting levels across different rooms to avoid sudden changes in brightness. Consider adding lighting to dimly lit areas and using curtains or shades to minimise glare.

### **Night-Time Navigation**

Install night lights along pathways from bedrooms to bathrooms to assist with walking at night-time, for example to get to the toilet. Night lights provide enough light for safety without disrupting sleep.

### **Regular Eye Checks**

Schedule routine eye examinations with opticians to address vision-related concerns. Updated visual aids, such as glasses or magnifiers, can significantly improve safety and independence at home.

### **Regular Hearing Checks**

Make sure you have your hearing checked regularly. If you have them, keep your hearing aids in good condition and wear them as advised.

### **Preventing Trips and Falls**

Eliminate tripping hazards by keeping pathways clear of clutter, loose rugs, and obstacles. Secure carpets and rugs to prevent slips and falls.

## **Fire Safety**

- Make sure that smoke alarms are strategically placed, such as in bedrooms and living rooms, and are loud enough for you to hear them. Regularly test alarms to check they are working .

- Make sure you have a plan for how to get out in the event of a fire. Minimise fire risks by following safe practices. Don't overload sockets and keep cords and wires in good condition.
- Minimise cooking-related hazards by never leaving stove tops unattended.



## Fire Safety

Ensuring fire safety in your home is very important, not only for preventing fires but also for reducing the risk of falls. These key considerations and tips will create a safer home environment.

Ensuring fire safety in your home is very important, not only for preventing fires but also for reducing the risk of falls.

Here are some key considerations and tips to keep both you and your home safe.

### **Smoke alarms**

Do you have working smoke alarms in the correct places in your home? Smoke alarms are vital for early detection of fires. Ensure you have them installed on every floor of your home, especially in hallways and near bedrooms. Test them regularly to make sure they are in good working condition.

### **Fire home safety check**

Consider a safety check from your local fire brigade. Many fire departments offer this service. During a home safety check, experts will provide valuable safety advice, make recommendations, and even install and test smoke alarms if needed.

### **Clear escape routes**

To reduce the risk of falls during an emergency, make sure your escape routes are clear. Keep hallways and staircases free from clutter and obstacles. In the event of a fire, you'll need a safe and clear path to exit your home quickly.

### **Fire prevention**

Take measures to prevent fires in your home. Avoid overloading electrical sockets, keep flammable materials away from heat sources, and be cautious with cooking appliances.

Contact your local fire brigade for a fire home safety check, and help with installing smoke alarms.

### **Fire Safety:**

For a fire home safety check with Cheshire Fire & Rescue, [complete an online request form](#)

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[Cheshire Fire & Rescue Safe and Well Booklet](#)

## Bathroom

Your bathroom can be one of the most high-risk places for potential slips and falls. But by applying the following safety advice, you can greatly reduce the risk.

Your bathroom can be one of the most high-risk places for potential slips and falls. But by applying the following safety advice, you can greatly reduce the risk

Here are some tips to help you identify hazards and reduce falls risk in your bathroom:

### **Flooring safety**

Wet vinyl or tile flooring can pose a high risk of slipping. To prevent accidents, consider using non-slip mats, fitted carpets, or carpet tiles in your bathroom. If the floor gets wet, mop it as soon as possible to minimise risk

### **Bathing and showering**

Make sure that you can access the bath and shower safely. Non-slip rubberized mats are readily available to provide stability. Consider installing a fixed grab rail, which can significantly reduce risk and increase confidence when entering or exiting the bath or shower. If you find it challenging to bathe safely, consider seeking advice regarding additional safety measures or support

### **Toilet height**

Getting on and off the toilet should be safe and comfortable. A toilet that is too high or too low may be more difficult to use and can increase falls risk. Seek further advice if you are unsure or concerned about the height of your toilet

### **Toilet accessibility**

If you use your hands for support when getting on or off the toilet, installing a fixed grab rail or frame around the toilet is a safer option than using a radiator or other bathroom fitting. These options provide more stable support and can be installed by a handy person if help is required

### **Clear pathways**

Having a clear space to move around is very important, especially if you might be rushing to get to the toilet. Avoid having thick or fluffy mats by the bath or toilet that could be a trip or slip hazard. Make sure you have a clear pathway to access the toilet at all times, including during the night

For adaptations and other solutions, including handrails, consider speaking to organisations specialising in home modifications or social services. Their expertise can help ensure your bedroom is a safe and functional space.

Links and Resources

### **Home Adaptations:**

Contact your local Handyperson Service for support with minor adaptations such as additional handrails:

Cheshire East Handyperson Service: Orbitas

Cheshire West and Chester Handyperson Service: Homekey+

### **Managing at Home:**

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If you feel you are struggling to manage at home due to changes in your mobility, contact your GP surgery and ask to be referred for assessment for rehabilitation.

## Bedroom

Your bedroom is a place of relaxation and sleep, but also a place where the risk of falls is present. By making small changes, you can create a safer and more comfortable environment.

Your bedroom is a place of relaxation and sleep, but also a place where the risk of falls is present. By making small changes, you can create a safer and more comfortable environment.

Here are some tips to help you identify hazards and reduce falls risk in your bedroom:

### **Getting in and out of bed**

Assess if you feel safe getting in and out of bed. Bedding or clothing that trails onto the floor or is made of a slippery fabric might increase the risk of tripping or slipping. An unsupportive mattress or a bed that is not the correct height can make it more difficult for you to get on and off safely and increase the risk of you rolling out of bed.

### **Bedside lighting**

Make sure there's a convenient way to turn the bedroom light on and off from your bed. Installing a pull cord for the main light within arm's reach is ideal. Alternatively, use a bedside lamp, a battery-powered push light, or sensor lights by the bed and in the corridor.

### **Telephone accessibility**

Having a telephone in your bedroom can be useful. If you have one, make sure that your pendant alarm or mobile phone is within easy reach when you are in bed. Try to charge mobile phones during the daytime to avoid leaving them plugged in overnight, as this can pose a fire risk.

### **Clear pathways**

Do you have objects or furniture on the floor which may block your pathway when walking around the room? This can make walking more difficult if having to step around things and poses a trip hazard. Make sure you create enough space to walk around freely, and particularly a clear path between the bed and the toilet.

For adaptations and other solutions, including handrails, consider speaking to organisations specialising in home modifications or social services. Their expertise can help ensure your bedroom is a safe and functional space.

Links and Resources

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If you feel you are struggling to manage at home due to changes in your mobility, contact your GP surgery and ask to be referred for assessment for rehabilitation.

## Kitchen

Your kitchen can be a bustling area, but it's important to maintain safety to minimise your risk of falling. Our easy-to-follow advice helps you identify hazards and reduce falls risk in the kitchen.

Your kitchen can be a bustling area, but it's important to maintain safety to minimise your risk of falling. Our easy-to-follow advice helps you identify hazards and reduce falls risk in the kitchen:

### **Wet flooring**

Is there a chance of slipping on wet floors, especially near the sink and washing machine? To reduce the risk, use non-slip mats, fitted carpets, or carpet tiles in wet areas. Promptly mop up wet floor areas to prevent accidents

### **Accessibility**

Are your everyday items within easy reach, or do you find yourself stretching or climbing on chairs or stools? Make sure that frequently used items are placed on easily reachable shelves. And try to avoid reaching above head height, as it can lead to dizziness

### **Steps and ladders**

If you have to use steps, are they secure, with a handrail and a system to keep the legs locked? Never use chairs or stools to stand on because they may tip over easily. Properly designed steps with an effective handrail and leg-lock mechanism can be used safely if you are physically fit

### **Carrying items**

Do you struggle to carry items from the kitchen to the dining area? If so, a kitchen trolley might be helpful. However, keep in mind that trolleys are not meant as walking aids but for transporting items. If you have concerns about your stability, consult a mobility aid shop, or request a referral to an Occupational Therapist or Physiotherapist

For adaptations and other solutions, including handrails, consider speaking to organisations specialising in home modifications or social services. Their expertise can help ensure your kitchen is a safe and functional space.

### **Links and Resources**

#### **Home Adaptations:**

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## **Fire Safety:**

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## **Fire Safety**

- Chuck out your chip pan – they can be very dangerous and cause thousands of fires each year
- Stand by your hob and make sure you don't get distracted when cooking; if you need to leave the room turn it off
- Don't put metal in the microwave
- Be aware of draping clothing when cooking and keep tea towels away from the hob
- Washers and dryers can cause fires so only use when in the home and switch off when not in use if you can

## Living Room or Lounge

By recognising and addressing potential fall hazards at home, you can significantly reduce the risk of falls, accidents and injuries. We'll help you spot common causes, and discover easy ways to make your home safer.

By recognising and addressing potential fall hazards at home, you can significantly reduce the risk of falls, accidents and injuries. We'll help you spot common causes, and discover easy ways to make your home safer.

Here are some tips to help you spot hazards and reduce falls risk in your living room:

### **Chair castors**

Are there castors under your chairs that make them slide when you're trying to get up? While castors make furniture easier to move, they can be risky. Consider removing them or replacing them with cup-shaped carpet savers to prevent unwanted chair movement

### **Chair height**

Can you get in and out of your chair comfortably? If your chair is too high or too low, it may make sitting or standing more difficult, and increase your risk of falls. Adjust the chair's height if needed or consider swapping it with one that suits you better

### **Obstructed windows**

Do you have to lean or reach to open windows or curtains because furniture is in the way? This can be a tripping hazard. Ask for assistance to rearrange your furniture, making sure that windows and curtains are easily accessible

### **Clear pathways**

Do you have objects or furniture on the floor which may block your pathway when walking around the room? This can make walking more difficult if having to step around things and poses a trip hazard. Make sure you create enough space to walk around freely

Creating a safe living room environment is essential for preventing falls and ensuring your comfort. If you need further assistance or information, consider reaching out to local resources such as social services, or the fire brigade.

Links and Resources

### **Home Adaptations:**

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[Cheshire East Handyperson Service: Orbitas](#)



## Cheshire West and Chester Handyperson Service: Homekey+

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### **Fire Safety:**

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## Cheshire Fire & Rescue Safe and Well Booklet

### **Fire Safety Advice**

- Make sure electrical wires and plugs are kept in good condition, and don't overload sockets
- Don't dry clothes too close to a heat source – they may catch fire from radiated heat
- If you smoke make sure you put it out fully in an ashtray and empty ashtrays regularly

By recognising and addressing potential fall hazards at home, you can significantly reduce the risk of falls, accidents and injuries. We'll help you spot common causes, and discover easy ways to make your home safer.

# Staying Active



## Staying Active

### Guidelines and Advice

Before diving into an exercise routine, we've included important preparations to ensure your safety and well-being. Explore these expert recommendations and take your first steps towards healthy, independent and safer ageing.

#### Physical Activity Guidelines for Older Adults

For individuals aged 65 and over, the following information provides a guide for staying physically active:

- **Daily activity:** Aim to do some form of physical activity every day, even if it's light in intensity. This could involve a leisurely stroll, gentle stretching, or basic mobility exercises
- **Strength, balance, and flexibility:** Include activities that specifically target the improvement of strength, balance, and flexibility into your routine on at least two days a week. These exercises are key for maintaining stability and preventing falls
- **Moderate or vigorous activity:** Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity each week. If you are already active, consider doing 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity weekly. Alternatively, you can combine both moderate and vigorous activities to reach your target
- **Break up sitting time:** Reduce long periods of sitting or lying down by breaking them up with short bursts of physical activity. Even simple movements, like standing up and stretching, can help prevent stiffness and keep you mobile

**You can download and print the Physical Activity for Adults and Older Adults guide below:**

[Physical Activity for Adults and Older Adults \(PDF\)](#)

Before starting your exercise routine, it's essential to make some necessary preparations:

- **Sturdy support:** Make sure you have something sturdy and stable to hold onto during exercises. A kitchen worktop is an ideal choice
- **Supportive footwear:** Wear supportive footwear that provides stability and comfort
- **Stay hydrated:** Keep a glass of water within reach to stay hydrated during your workout
- **Start slowly:** Begin with exercises that you can comfortably manage. Start at a slow pace and build up slowly
- **Medical consultation:** If you have a heart condition or any other medical condition that may affect your ability to exercise, it's advisable to consult with your GP or healthcare provider before starting exercise

## Cheshire East Local Exercise Classes

As well as the physical benefits, joining an exercise class can boost your social interactions, opening opportunities for new friendships. A group dynamic can also help keep you motivated and committed to your goals.

FREE Exercise Classes Provided by the Council



The One You Cheshire East Service provides two different exercise programmes, which are fully funded by Cheshire East Council. Both classes are open to residents of Cheshire East who meet certain eligibility criteria.

### One You Cheshire East Service

You can self-refer to these classes, so you do not need a healthcare referral. Once signed up, the team will book you in for an assessment with a Health & Wellbeing Coach to discuss what would be best for you.

#### **Stand Strong**

Stand Strong is a strength and balance class, with exercises targeted specifically at reducing the risk of falls and improving mobility. The programme runs for 26 weeks, and participants attend classes once a week for 60 minutes.

Stand Strong may be suitable for you if you are **65 or over**, and you:

- Have fallen in the last 12 months
- Feel unsteady when standing or walking
- Worry about falling over

Visit the website for more information or to self-refer:

[Stand Strong Website](#)

#### **Move More**

Move More is a group exercise class designed for people who are physically inactive and want to get fitter and healthier. The programme runs for 12 weeks. To be eligible, you must currently live a sedentary or inactive lifestyle, completing less than 60 minutes of exercise that raises your heart rate per week.

[Move More Website](#)

### **Recondition Cheshire East – FREE Live Online Exercise Classes**

If you would prefer to join a live exercise class from the comfort of your own home, there is also a free

online exercise programme called Recondition Cheshire East. This service is funded by Cheshire East Council and the NHS and delivered by Everybody Health & Leisure. Two different classes are available via this programme, for residents over 18 who meet certain eligibility criteria.

- **Be Steady Be Safe** is a falls prevention programme, suitable for people with mobility or balance difficulties looking to reduce their risk of falls. The exercises are designed to improve strength, balance and mobility.
- **Move It Or Lose It** is designed to improve flexibility, aerobic health, strength and balance for those who are physically inactive or new to exercise.

Visit the website to find out more, or self-refer into the programme:

[Recondition Cheshire East Website](#)

### **Finding Other Exercise Classes**

Seek out exercise classes specifically designed for older individuals. If you're unsure what type of class would be right for you, an exercise professional at your local leisure centre may be able to provide some guidance.

The Everybody Health & Leisure Centres spread across Cheshire East offer a number of different exercise classes and fitness programmes.

Visit their website to read more and find your local centre:

[Everybody Health & Leisure Centres](#)

### **Live Well Directory**

The Cheshire East Council "Live Well" directory is a useful resource if you'd like to search for local exercise classes or groups (such as walking groups), or other services close to you.

[Cheshire East Council "Live Well" directory](#)

If you're not quite ready for group classes or prefer exercising at home, explore the link below pages in our 'Staying Active' section for simple exercises that you can do in the comfort of your own space.

Links and Resources

[View exercises at home](#)

## Cheshire West & Chester Local Exercise Classes

As well as the physical benefits, joining an exercise class can boost your social interactions, opening opportunities for new friendships. A group dynamic can also help keep you motivated and committed to your goals.

FREE Exercise Classes Provided by the Council



The [Cheshire Change Hub](#) Service funded by Cheshire West & Chester Council delivers some free exercise programmes. These classes are open to residents of Cheshire West & Chester who meet certain eligibility criteria.

- **Better Balance** is a falls prevention class designed to improve strength and balance. The programme runs for up to 25 weeks. To be eligible you must be aged 65 or over, registered with a Cheshire West & Chester GP, and have poor mobility or feel at risk of having a fall. You would need to ask your GP to refer you into this service.
- **Exercise Safely** is a 12-week programme designed to help individuals with certain health conditions get into exercise safely. To be eligible, you must be over 18 years of age, and have a diagnosis of one of the health conditions outlined on the Cheshire Change Hub website. You would need to be referred into this service by your GP.

For more information about the programmes provided by the Cheshire Change Hub, visit their website:

[Cheshire Change Hub](#)

Finding Other Exercise Classes

Seek out exercise classes specifically designed for older individuals. If you're unsure what type of class would be right for you, an exercise professional at your local leisure centre may be able to provide some guidance.

The [Brio Leisure Centres](#) located across Cheshire West & Chester offer a number of different exercise classes and fitness programmes. Visit their website to read more and find your local centre:  
[www.brioleisure.org](http://www.brioleisure.org)

[Brio Leisure Centres Website](#)

**Cheshire West & Cheshire Council “Live Well” directory**

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[Live Well Cheshire West & Chester Directory](#)

Exercise at Home:

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Links and Resources

[View exercises at home](#)

## Strength Exercises

### Prepare Your Space

To ensure your safety, consider performing strength exercises near a stable chair or surface (such as a kitchen worktop) just in case you need support. Wear loose, comfortable clothing that allows for freedom of movement, and have a bottle of water within reach to stay hydrated during your workout.

### Gradual Progression

Remember that progress happens gradually. Begin with a manageable number of repetitions for each exercise, and as you become more comfortable, aim to increase the repetitions over time.

### Consistency Matters

To get the most out of exercise, aim to do it regularly and make it part of your daily routine. 'Little and often' may be the best approach to start with. You can increase or decrease the amount or frequency, depending on how you feel – listen to your body.

### Video Resources

#### **Shoulder Press Video**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0l9jj\\_vD5GM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0l9jj_vD5GM)

#### **Standing Push Ups**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fqItYG4Bfes>

#### **Strengthen Your Hips**

#### **Standing Up From the Floor**

#### **Strength With Alex**

#### **Sit to Stand Challenge**

#### **The Cuppa Routine**

#### **Easy exercises to build into everyday**

#### **Guided Squats**



## **Exercise with everyday objects**

### **Seated Leg Raise**

Links and Resources

[NHS Strength Exercises](#)

## Balance Exercises

### Create a Safe Environment

To ensure your safety, consider performing strength exercises near a stable chair or surface (such as a kitchen worktop) just in case you need support. Wear loose, comfortable clothing that allows for freedom of movement, and have a bottle of water within reach to stay hydrated during your workout.

### Gradual Progression

If it's been a while since you last exercised, don't worry. These balance exercises are suited for beginners. Begin with a comfortable number of repetitions for each exercise, and gradually increase them over time. Patience and consistency will help you make steady progress.

To get the most out of exercise, aim to do it regularly and make it part of your daily routine. 'Little and often' may be the best approach to start with. You can increase or decrease the amount or frequency, depending on how you feel – listen to your body.

### Video Resources

#### **Balance Class - Everybody Health and Leisure Video**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mr\\_ZILDNUR8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mr_ZILDNUR8)

#### **Improve Your Balance in 5 Minutes Video**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ujoD1l4fnP4>

#### **Walk the Plank Video**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KtE2\\_SmXmT8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KtE2_SmXmT8)

#### **Balance with Sandra Video**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HiDpYePaUHg>

#### **Improve Your Balance Routine Video**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mrPjjFlp9wo>

### Links and Resources

[NHS Balance Exercises](#)

## Sitting Exercises

If you are able to complete exercises while standing up, this will be the most effective way to improve your strength, balance and mobility. However, if you are not able to exercise in standing, you can still gain benefits by completing seated exercises. These can help you to start improving your strength, flexibility and joint condition, which may allow you to progress to standing exercises in the future.

### Getting Started

Before you begin, make sure you have a solid, stable chair without wheels. This chair should allow you to sit with your feet flat on the floor and your knees comfortably bent at right angles. Chairs with armrests should be avoided as they can restrict your movement.

### Dress Comfortably and Stay Hydrated

Wear loose, comfortable clothing that allows for easy movement. Keep a bottle of water within reach to stay hydrated during your exercise session.

### Gradual Progression

Remember, building up your exercise routine gradually is key to success. Start with a manageable number of repetitions for each exercise, and over time, aim to increase the repetitions at your own pace.

### Consistency Is Key

To get the most out of exercise, aim to do it regularly and make it part of your daily routine. ‘Little and often’ may be the best approach to start with. You can increase or decrease the amount or frequency, depending on how you feel – listen to your body.

### Video Resources

#### **50m MIND & BRAIN Low Impact Seniors Workout Video**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUKjjTzDiR8>

#### **Wake Up Routine Video**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-bPfgpSMin8>

#### **Seated Leg Raise Video**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2w80Gul-Syl>

#### **Shoulder Press Video**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0l9jj\\_vD5GM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0l9jj_vD5GM)

#### **Foot Exercises Video**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cH6gfWu216A>

Links and Resources

[View other types of exercises](#)

[NHS Sitting Exercises](#)

## General and Flexibility Exercises

### Prepare Your Space

Make sure you have a comfortable, uncluttered space for your exercises. Wear loose, comfortable clothing that allows for freedom of movement. Keep a bottle of water handy to stay hydrated during your routine. Have a support nearby (either a stable chair or surface) if you feel you might need it.

### Progression and Consistency

To get the most out of exercise, aim to do it regularly and make it part of your daily routine. 'Little and often' may be the best approach to start with. You can increase or decrease the amount or frequency, depending on how you feel – listen to your body.

### Videos Resources

#### **Afternoons with Move it or Lose it**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bqr5Wcru9N4>

#### **Freedom to Move**

#### **Chair Yoga for Flexibility**

#### **Pelvic Floor Exercises to Improve Continence**

### Links and Resources

[NHS Flexibility Exercises](#)

## 5 Five In Five

If you want to start building small amounts of activity into your day, the Five in Five workouts from We Are Undefeatable can help you to get moving.

Designed for people living with long term health conditions but also useful for older adults, these five minute mini-workouts are completely customisable to suit your needs and ability.

Getting started is simple. [Download the Five in Five booklet](#) to find different mini workouts. Each one includes five movements which you can do seated or standing for one minute each, to build a five-minute workout.

### Video Resources

#### **Five in Five Video**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ayRZ9dpb9G0>

### Links and Resources

[We Are Undefeatable: Five In Five](#)

## Freedom To Move

Being active doesn't have to require a costly investment. Teaming up with Bill Bailey, We Are Undefeatable has created three easy to follow videos that show you the free ways you can stay active through everyday activities that are suited to everyone's capabilities.

### Video Resources

#### **Freedom to Move Video**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GbfOPpHfLoc>

Teaming up with Bill Bailey, We Are Undefeatable has created three easy-to-follow videos that show the free ways you can stay active through everyday activities that are suited to everyone's capabilities.

#### **Kitchen Routine with Bill Bailey**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hs\\_r9WEkg6w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hs_r9WEkg6w)

#### **Garden Routine with Bill Bailey**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jMAxBbFd1cg>

#### **Morning Routine with Bill Bailey**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nDz\\_MRkJFC4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nDz_MRkJFC4)

## The Importance of Physical Activity

Maintaining an active lifestyle is essential for reducing the risk of falls and for promoting overall health and well-being as you age. It can help reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, and a number of other health problems. However, before starting a new exercise routine, it's advisable to consult your GP, especially if you haven't been active for a while or if you have specific medical concerns. They can provide guidance on appropriate activities and intensity levels tailored to your fitness level and health status.

Remember that something is better than nothing, even if it is just breaking up long periods of sitting with regular walks around the house or doing some exercises in your chair. If you're already reasonably active, you still need to make sure your strength, balance and bone health is at its best. Tai chi, dancing, swimming and bowls are all great options and choosing something you enjoy will help you make it part of a routine.



# Find Support





## Contacting Your GP

For general health concerns or to discuss your falls risk and prevention strategies, your GP can provide guidance and referrals. They may suggest a referral to services such as Community Therapy, Social Services, or community exercise groups.

## Social Prescribing

Did you know that your GP Practice also has a service called Social Prescribing? Social Prescribers can provide support and advice on non-health-related issues, such as stress, loneliness and debt. They can also help to connect or signpost you to local support services, activities or groups. To access this service, contact your GP surgery and request a referral.

## Support with Medication

For advice or support about medication and falls risk, speak with your GP or a community pharmacist. Remember it's important to have your medication reviewed yearly.

## Social Services

Consider contacting social services if:

- You are struggling with day-to-day living at home, and you feel you might need care support
- You have a long-term health condition and think you need major home adaptations

## Adult Contact Team Information

Cheshire East Adult Contact Team: **0300 123 5010**

Cheshire West & Chester Adult Contact Team: **0300 123 7034**

## Free Falls Prevention Exercise Classes

Exercises specifically designed for improving strength and balance are the most effective at reducing falls risk. There are free falls prevention classes provided by the Council. See below for details and eligibility criteria.

### **Cheshire East FREE Class: Stand Strong (One You Cheshire East)**

[Visit Stand Strong \(One You Cheshire East\)](#)

### **Cheshire West and Chester FREE Class:**

Better Balance (Cheshire Change Hub) Free Falls Prevention Service in Cheshire

[Visit Better Balance Free Falls Prevention](#)



# Care Homes



Falls become more common as we get older, and for older adults living in care homes the risk is even greater. There are many things that contribute to this increased risk including, (but not limited to):

- Frailty
- Presence of long-term conditions
- Physical inactivity
- Taking multiple medications
- Memory problems or cognitive decline
- Being in new or unfamiliar surroundings

However, in many cases taking the right steps at the right time can actively support an individual and reduce the risk of falls and harm from falls.

The factors that contribute to a person's risk of falling are unique to them. For this reason, it is important that the approach to managing and preventing falls in care homes is person-centred and tailored to each individual resident. Implementing successful strategies to reduce falls risk can have a huge impact on a resident's level of independence, participation, and enjoyment in life.

This page is designed to provide information and useful resources for carers and care providers working in the community.

## **World Falls Guidelines: Guidance for managing falls in care homes**

This guidance is summarised below:

- All residents should be considered at high risk of falls
- A multifactorial falls risk assessment should be completed on admission to identify factors contributing to falls risk. Appropriate interventions should then be implemented to avoid falls and falls-related injuries.
- Following a fall, an assessment should be completed in order to reassess falls risk factors, adjust the intervention strategy for the resident and avoid unnecessary hospital admissions
- All staff should be offered falls prevention training
- Nutrition for residents should be optimised, including eating food rich in calcium and proteins
- Vitamin D supplementation is advised for care home residents, as most residents are deficient
- Physical activity and exercise should be promoted to residents (when feasible and safe)
- Use of physical restraints should be avoided for the purpose for falls prevention

For full guidance click visit the website below.

[World guidelines for falls prevention](#)

## Recording & Reporting Falls

Recording and reporting falls consistently is key, to allow for review and analysis of potential themes or patterns.

Things to remember when recording falls:

- Record accurately
- State fact and not what you think happened
- State who was involved
- State where the fall happened
- State the activity that was being carried out
- State what happened if observed
- State any injuries
- State any intervention
- Then what actions are you going to take to reduce the risk of them falling again?

**Follow your local policy for reporting and post fall checks for your resident.**

## Falls Prevention & Post-Fall Management Resources

### **REACT TO FALLS**

An excellent online training package designed specifically for staff working in care homes. The package includes educational videos, print-outs, and a phone app to help staff learn about falls risk factors and interventions to reduce them.

#### REACT TO FALLS Information

Switching to Decaf Webinar

An interesting webinar delivered by Care England and University Hospitals of Leicester, explaining the benefits of promoting decaffeinated drinks in reducing falls.

Watch Switching to Decaf Webinar

**STEADY ON  
YOUR FEET**

[www.steadyonyourfeet.org](http://www.steadyonyourfeet.org)