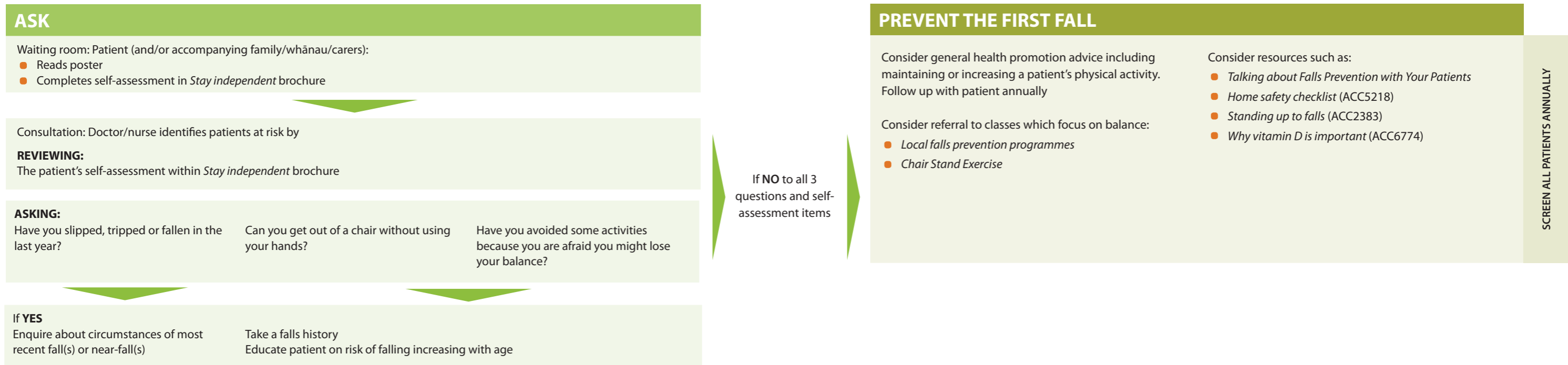


# Falls Algorithm



ASSESS		ACT		Processes and tools/resources		Specialist input or referral as needed			
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY	<b>Balance, strength and gait</b>	▶ Enhance balance and strength	▶	Use one or more of:	▶	Refer to a Physiotherapist for:	▶		
	<b>Mobility</b>	▶ Improve or assist mobility						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Timed Up and Go (TUG test)</i></li> <li>● <i>30 second Chair Stand test</i></li> <li>● <i>Four-Stage Balance test</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Assessment of gait and balance</li> <li>● One-on-one progressive gait and balance retraining</li> <li>● Strengthening exercises</li> <li>● Recommending and teaching correct use of assistive devices</li> </ul>
	<b>Muscle strength and tone (especially lower limb)</b>	▶ Prescribe vitamin D supplements if at risk of deficiency						Neurological examination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Assess muscle tone, in particular look for cogwheel tone</li> <li>● Vitamin D supplementation improves neuromuscular and psychomotor performance and is therefore thought to reduce falls</li> </ul>	Refer for a Green Prescription or to a falls prevention programme. For patients aged over 80 years; consider referral to a home-based programme. Contact Green Prescription co-ordinators (for a list see the Ministry of Health website) or ACC community injury prevention consultants for a list of local falls prevention programmes (enquire at: <a href="mailto:information@acc.co.nz">information@acc.co.nz</a> ).
	<b>Feet and/or shoes</b>	▶ Address foot problems and ensure safe footwear						Examine feet for structural abnormalities, deficits in sensation and proprioception, ask if patient experiences any foot pain. Evaluate footwear (see: <i>Standing up to falls ACC2383</i> )	Refer to a Podiatrist for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Assessment and treatment of foot problems</li> <li>● Prescription of corrective footwear or orthotics</li> </ul>
UNDERLYING CONDITIONS	<b>Medicines (especially psychotropics)</b>	▶ Review and optimise medicine use	▶	Taper and stop psychotropic medicines if there are no clear indications or evidence of benefit, otherwise reduce doses if possible and increase non-pharmacological treatments Monitor patient as they make recommended changes.	▶	Follow up as appropriate	▶		
	<b>Dizziness or postural hypotension</b>	▶ Manage and monitor hypotension						Check supine and standing orthostatic blood pressure using <i>Measuring Blood Pressure: Detecting Postural Hypotension</i> Cardiovascular examination, rate and rhythm of pulse Discuss with patient and give information on postural hypotension Recommend medicine changes to reduce hypotension Monitor patient as they make recommended changes	Follow up as appropriate
	<b>Cognition</b>	▶ Address any cognition problems						Assess for cognitive impairment and depression	Refer for specialist input if appropriate
	<b>Vision</b>	▶ Optimise vision						Assessment for visual impairment Discuss increased falls risk with bi-focal and multifocal lenses with patient	Refer to an Optometrist or Ophthalmologist for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identification and treatment of medical conditions contributing to vision problems</li> <li>● Problems with visual acuity and contrast sensitivity</li> </ul>
	<b>Continence problems</b>	▶ Manage continence problems						Consider urgency caused by diuretics or laxatives	Refer for specialist input if appropriate
	<b>Any other health problems that may increase the risk of falling</b>	▶ Address other health problems						Discuss with patient and family increased falls risk from certain conditions, stroke, parkinsonism, motor neurone disease	Refer for specialist input if appropriate
	<b>Home safety</b>	▶ Optimise home safety						Counsel patient about reducing fall hazards. Give information on reducing hazards in the home: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Home safety checklist</i> (ACC 5218)</li> <li>● <i>Standing up to falls</i> (ACC2383)</li> </ul>	Refer patients at higher risk of falling to an occupational therapist for home safety assessment and modification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Assess safety and the patient's ability to function in the home</li> <li>● Arrange for installment of rails and other aids if required</li> </ul>

TARGETED TO THOSE AT RISK: MULTI-FACTORIAL ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTIONS