

Four things you can do to prevent falls:

- 1** Improve your balance and strength – ask your doctor or nurse to recommend a programme or exercises that are right for you.
- 2** Ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist to review your medicines
- 3** Get annual eye check-ups and update your glasses
- 4** Make your home safer by:
 - ✓ Removing clutter and tripping hazards, including mats and rugs
 - ✓ Putting railings on stairs and adding grab bars in the bathroom and toilet
 - ✓ Having good lighting, especially on stairs

Contact your doctor, nurse or local support agencies for information on exercises or programmes in your area.

Local programmes:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

For more information on falls prevention, please visit:

www.acc.co.nz/olderfalls



This resource was developed by bpac^{nz} for the Health Quality and Safety Commission, based on the “STEADI” falls campaign by the US Centres for Diseases Control and Prevention (CDC).

STAY independent



Are you at risk of falling?

Complete the checklist inside



Check Your Risk of Falling

Please circle "Yes" or "No" for each statement below			Why it matters
I have slipped, tripped or fallen in the last year.	Yes	No	People who have fallen once are more likely to fall again
I need to push with my hands to stand up from a chair.	Yes	No	This is a sign of weak leg muscles which can be a major reason for falling.
I am worried about falling.	Yes	No	People who are worried about falling are more likely to fall.
Sometimes I feel unsteady when walking, or have been told to use a walking stick to help get myself around safely.	Yes	No	Unsteadiness, or needing support while walking, are signs you may have poor balance.
I steady myself by holding onto furniture when walking at home.	Yes	No	This is also a sign you may have poor balance.
I have lost some feeling in my feet.	Yes	No	Numbness in your feet can cause stumbles and lead to falls.
I take medicine that sometimes makes me feel sleepy, feel light-headed, dizzy or more drowsy than usual. (sleeping pills, blood pressure pills etc.)	Yes	No	Side effects from medicines can sometimes increase your chance of falling.
I often feel sad or depressed.	Yes	No	Symptoms of depression, such as feeling sad or unmotivated, have been linked to falls.
It has been more than two years since I had my eyes checked	Yes	No	Your eyes can change as you age, your glasses may need to as well.
I sometimes have to rush to the toilet.	Yes	No	Rushing to the bathroom, especially at night, increases your chance of falling.

If you answer **yes** to one or more questions, you could be at risk of falling. Discuss your answers with your health practitioner.

Your health practitioner may suggest:

- Seeing a physiotherapist to check your strength and balance
- Attending a fall prevention programme or exercise class
- Seeing a podiatrist about your feet
- Changing your medicines, particularly if some make you light-headed or drowsy
- Having medical tests, such as testing if your blood pressure drops when you stand up
- Having your eyesight checked annually.

These are all positive steps towards preventing falls and helping keep you independent.