

# Top tips to prevent falls

This leaflet provides useful information to help you reduce your risk of having a fall. However, it is not possible to prevent every fall. It is vitally important not to ignore a fall if it does occur and to always tell someone. If you are concerned or would like further information please discuss with a healthcare professional or contact the Community Falls Prevention and Management Service on 028 9504 7656.



## 1. Keep active

Although you may be nervous after a fall, it is important to keep moving to help keep your muscles strong. Try to avoid long periods of sitting, get up and walk at least every hour within your home. If you are able, go for a walk outside a few times a week. Please see overleaf for more information on strength & balance exercise classes.

## 3. Mind your health + medicines

Know what is normal for you, contact your GP if there is a change in your health. Take your medications as prescribed but if you think a medication is making you feel unsteady then speak to your GP or Pharmacist.



## 5. Check your vision + hearing

It is important to have regular eye tests and wear glasses recommended by your optician. Hearing loss can make you less aware of your environment and triple your risk of falling. It is important to wear your hearing aids and speak to your GP if you are having difficulty with your hearing.

## 7. Look after your feet

Be sure to wear well-fitted shoes or slippers - avoid slip-on or backless footwear. Report any pain or changes in sensation (tingling or numbness) to your GP or podiatrist.



## 2. Avoid taking risks

Try not to rush or get up too quick. Avoid over-reaching or standing on a chair. Remember to use any mobility aids you have been provided with.



Never take unnecessary risks - stop, think and ask for help if you need it.

## 4. Take care of your bones

Make sure your daily diet has enough calcium by trying to eat a good portion of milk, dairy or fortified alternatives. Help your body make Vitamin D by safely enjoying daily short periods in the sun from April to September. Avoid smoking as this damages the cells that build bone in our bodies.



## 6. Eat a balanced diet

A varied and balanced diet is important for reducing your risk of falls. Aim to eat regular meals including fruit and vegetables. Unless you have been advised otherwise, try to drink 6-8 glasses of water or fluids a day. Avoid drinking more than the recommended daily units of alcohol.

## 8. Stay safe at home

The most common place for a fall is in or around the home so it is important to make sure your home is hazard-free and well lit. Try to keep walk-ways clutter free, remove or secure mats and rugs, take extra time and care in wet areas such as the bathroom. Keep your personal alarm or mobile phone with you at all times.

# Falls Prevention

## Strength + Balance Classes

FREE 12 week programme



Over 65?

Live in the Belfast Trust area?

Have you had a fall, near miss or ongoing fear of falling that affects your daily activities?

The Belfast HSCT together with Active Belfast are running Falls Prevention Group Exercise Programmes across the city.

The exercise classes are run by Falls Activity Practitioners and last for 60 minutes.

The class aims to improve your strength, balance, activity levels, confidence, general wellbeing and reduce your risk of falls.



### Locations:

(subject to change + availability)

- Olympia Leisure Centre
- Girdwood Community Hub
- Andersonstown Leisure Centre
- Maureen Sheehan Centre
- Hanwood Centre
- Shaftsbury Recreation Centre
- Avoniel Leisure Centre

If you are interested please contact **028 9504 7656** or **FallsServices@BelfastTrust.hscni.net** to find out if the class is suitable for you