

Neuro Café: 4th October 2023

Falls Awareness – getting on and off the floor

Falls

- A fall is an unexpected event in which an individual comes to rest on the ground, floor, or lower level
- Falls can occur at all ages
- Each year 30% of adults aged over 65 years fall
- Falls can cause:
 - personal distress
 - fall related injuries
 - prolonged periods in hospital
 - admissions to care homes and institutions
 - even lead to death



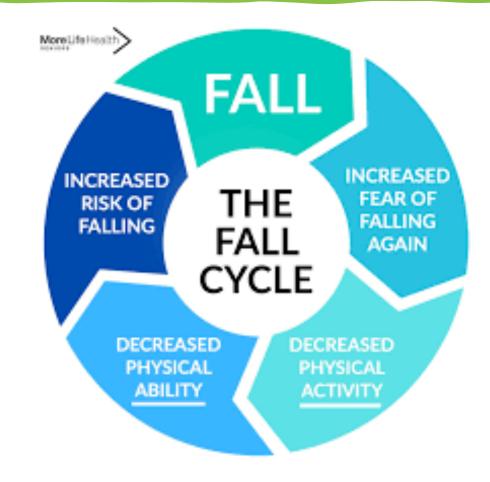
Falls

- Falls are the most common reason for ambulance callouts but around 50 % of these people do not need to go to hospital after a fall.
- Only half the people who fall without injury can get up again by themselves.
- Many stay on the floor for at least an hour. So even when they are unhurt by the fall, they can develop complications such as pressure sores or pneumonia.
- Carers can hurt themselves when trying to get the person up again.



Fear of falling

- A fear of falling is recognised as a person's anxiety towards usual or normal walking, moving or mobilising, with the perception that a fall will occur.
- Fear of falling can be debilitating and cause a reduction in everyday movement.
- Leading to additional decline in functional ability, mobility, strength and balance which increases the overall risk of falling.
- "fear of falling can be more disabling than falling itself"



Why falls occur?

- Our bodies are intricate and our ability to remain upright depends on a complex range of systems working together:
 - eyesight
 - hearing
 - muscle strength
 - balance
- External factors can increase the likelihood of falls
 - medication polypharmacy, certain medications
 - infections urinary tract infections
 - poor footwear no grip on shoes
 - environmental hazards- wet surfaces, rugs,



Take Control of Your Health: 6 Steps to Prevent a Fall

Every 13 seconds, an older adult is seen in an emergency department for a fall-related injury.

Many falls are preventable.

Stay safe with these tips!



Find a good balance and exercise program

Look to build balance, strength, and flexibility. Contact your local Area Agency on Aging for referrals. Find a program you like and take a friend.



Talk to your health care provider

Ask for an assessment of your risk of falling. Share your history of recent falls.



Regularly review your medications with your doctor or pharmacist

Make sure side effects aren't increasing your risk of falling. Take medications only as prescribed.



Get your vision and hearing checked annually and update your eyeglasses

Your eyes and ears are key to keeping you



Keep your home safe

Remove tripping hazards, increase lighting, make stairs safe, and install grab bars in key areas.



Talk to your family members

Enlist their support in taking simple steps to stay safe. Falls are not just a



Falls prevention

Environment:

- De clutter
- Lift the rugs
- Improve the lighting think night light!
- Ensure floors not slippery
- Good footwear
- Nonslip bath/shower mat

Postural drop:

- Ensure your BP does not drop when moving from lying/ sitting to standing
- Check medications with pharmacist or GP

Strength and balance classes including Tai Chi Regular sight test

Neurological conditions & falls

- Falls are more common in people living with a neurological condition as many are impacted by
 - decreased sensation
 - decreased balance
 - decreased strength
 - decreased movement control/ co-ordination
 - difficulties with vision
 - difficulties regulating blood pressure

and for some conditions people take more risks due to difficulties with thinking and memory

- Falls are one of the most common secondary complication post stroke
- Recent systematic review in Parkinson's disease showed that 35-90% of people with PD fell at least once.



Creating a falls plan

- No one wants to have a fall, but it is good to create a fall plan to help if you did:
 - what you'll do
 - who you'll contact and
 - how they'll get to you
- The quicker you can get help after a fall, the less likely you are to experience unnecessary fear, distress, and complications like pressure sores and dehydration.



https://fallsassistant.org.uk



- **Falls Assistant** enables you to self-assess the key falls risks relevant to you and offer appropriate support and self-management advice.
- It has been developed with people who have had falls or are at a high risk of falling, along with local falls support professions.

What to do if you do fall

- Try and stay calm
- Take a few minutes to assess the situation and see if you have any injures or pain from the fall
- if you're not hurt, try to get up from the floor implementing the strategy you have been taught
- if you're hurt or unable to get off the floor, call for help and keep warm and moving as best you can while you wait

How To Get Off The Floor

Why is the ability to get off the floor so important?

- More than an hour on the floor leads to poorer outcomes
 - Increased risk of being admitted to hospital
 - Worse recovery of function
 - Increased fear of falling
 - Ultimately can lead to death
- Ambulance services being used to come and "pick people off the floor" and not taking the individual to hospital
 - Significant cost
 - Stretched resources

Factors affecting getting up after a fall

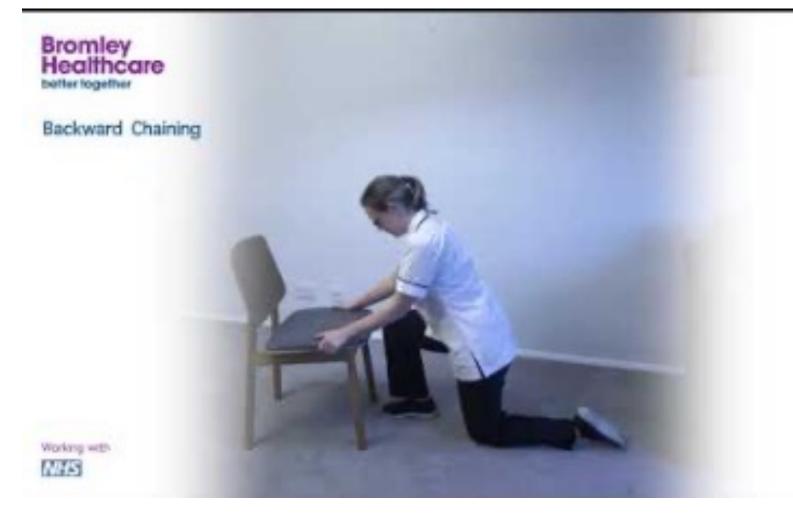
- Environment e.g. indoor vs outdoor, supportive sturdy furniture
- Physical ability strength, range, pain,
- Confidence in ability to get up:
 - have they been taught how to get up
 - do they have alternatives in place such as pendant alarm or specific equipment to help
 - A falls plan in place they can implement



How can therapists help with preparing people to manage getting up or getting help after a fall

- tailoring information to a person's environment, such as who is likely to be around to help
- optimise strength and physical function
- practice getting on and off the floor via backward chaining approach
- provide equipment that can help if backward chaining not appropriate
- ensure pain is treated
- promote confidence that short lived pain i.e kneeling on TKR versus complications of long lie
- earlier, proactive intervention before a fall occurs or soon after the fall
- build independence and confidence nurture
- educating the importance of practice/ dry runs with loved ones involved practice makes perfect!

Backward chaining



Backward chaining booklet - you can download this resource booklet

- Backward chaining breaks down the movement of lowering oneself to the floor and getting up into small steps.
- Each step must be practiced until enough confidence is gained to progress to the next step.

Benefits of training someone of how to get off the floor via backward chaining

- Practice each link and build mastery at each part
- Avoid long lies
- Improve confidence and reduce fear of being stuck on the floor
- Improve functional ability around and outside the home
- Key component of physiotherapy & falls guidelines
- Can reduce the need of calling an ambulance so cost saving

If you can't get up:

- Attract attention
 - Pendant alarm necklace or bracelet WEAR it!
 - Phone keep mobiles charged and on your person
 - Technology
 - Siri / Alexa- to call for help
 - Smart watch
 - Bang an item on wall repeatively
 - Try shouting
 - Ensuring that a family member or neighbour has a spare key
 - Keysafe box



- If you land on a hard surface like a kitchen floor, try to move to a place with carpet
- Find a nearby cushion or a jumper to roll up as a pillow





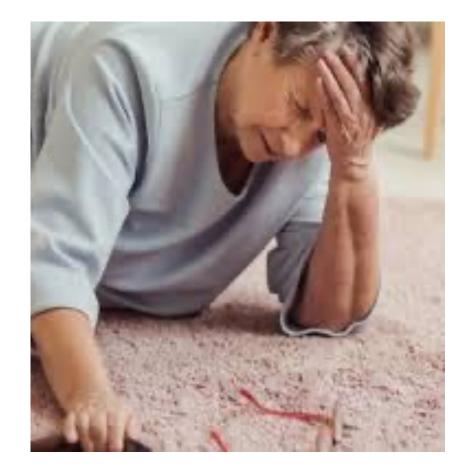
If you can't get up

Keep warm

- Move onto a carpet, rug or soft surface if possible
- Try to reach for a duvet cover, blanket of clothing which is nearby in order to keep yourself warm while you wait for help to arrive
- Roll away from damp areas
- If there's a draft, try to move away from it
- If someone is with you can they put the heating on or make you a hot drink

Keep moving

- Move positions to avoid getting sore
- Move joints to avoid stiffness and help circulation
- Avoid moving any part of your body that are painful following the fall





Hoists

- Full body hoists can be used to lift someone who is not injured back into the chair or bed if they can not get off the floor themselves
- Usually 2 people to help recommended if a manual hoist
- Practice this when hoist installed at home in case you need to do the task



Mangar

- Mangar Lifting Cushions are a range of air-powered emergency lifting cushions that are designed to be put under a fallen individual and inflated to lift the person off the floor.
- Three models:
- The Elk the smallest cushion and doesn't have a backrest, making it portable and popular with ambulance crews. Safe working load: 450kg
- The Eagle. Larger than the Elk, but smaller than the Camel, the Eagle is the latest cushion from Mangar and incorporates a backrest to help support the back, neck, and head of the fallen person. Safe working load: 220kg
- **The Camel.** The largest and widest cushion in the Mangar range, and with a backrest, the Camel is particularly suitable for larger and heavier residents. Safe working load: 320kg

At the earliest opportunity, the person should be encouraged to bend their knees and bring their feet towards the cushion.



Raizer Lifting Chairs (electric & manual)

- The Raizer II emergency lifting chair is a fast and safe solution to raising someone to their feet when they have fallen but are uninjured, and it only needs one person to work it.
- The Raizer is assembled around the person on the floor to lift them back to a seated or standing position. It consists of seven parts: the main seat, two backrest pieces, and four leg pieces.
- It can lift people weighing up to 150kg,





There is a cheaper manual one



Steady on... Stay SAFE









Resources

- Later life training
- https://www.fallsloop.com/uploads/Webinar%20Slide%20Decks/Back ward%20Chaining%20Webinar.pdf
- https://fallsassistant.org.uk
- https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/healthwellbeing/exercise/falls-prevention/
- https://www.rospa.com/home-safety/advice/falls-prevention/laterlife
- https://academic.oup.com/ageing/article/51/9/afac205/6730755?log in=false

Discussion about falls

- If you have fallen how did this make you feel?
- Did you get help?
- How did you build confidence post fall ?
- Is there anything we can do to help you through LEGS?