



**Neuro Café:**  
**4<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

**Falls Awareness – getting on and off the floor**

# Falls

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- 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

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- 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 ?

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- 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!


**1** 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.



**2** Talk to your health care provider  
Ask for an assessment of your risk of falling. Share your history of recent falls.



**3** 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.



**4** Get your vision and hearing checked annually and update your eyeglasses  
Your eyes and ears are key to keeping you on your feet.



**5** Keep your home safe  
Remove tripping hazards, increase lighting, make stairs safe, and install grab bars in key areas.



**6** Talk to your family members  
Enlist their support in taking simple steps to stay safe. Falls are not just a seniors' issue.



# 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

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- 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.

**Flexible Lifeline Systems**  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

### Written site-specific fall protection plan

Flexibility Lifeline Systems will be providing you with this fall protection plan. This fall protection plan is intended to be used as a guide only. It is not intended to be used as a substitute for the safety plan of the contractor. It is intended to be used in conjunction with the safety plan of the contractor.

Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Site Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contract No.: \_\_\_\_\_

**Site specific fall hazards and abatement measures (to be provided)**

Hazard	Abatement Measure

**Type of fall protection to be used (to be determined by contractor)**

Safety Net     Safety Harness     Fall Arrest System

**Equipment Inspection**

Item	Inspected	By	Date

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<https://fallsassistant.org.uk>

My falls



My health



Staying steady



A safe home



Keeping healthy




- **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

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- Try and stay calm
- Take a few minutes to assess the situation and see if you have any injuries 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

The image features a dark blue central panel with a black vertical bar on each side. Three yellow circular shapes are scattered across the blue area: a large one at the top center, a smaller one in the upper right, and a partial one at the bottom left. The text "How To Get Off The Floor" is centered in white.

# How To Get Off The Floor

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

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- 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

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- 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

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- 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

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- 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.

[Backward chaining booklet](#) - you can  
[download this resource booklet](#)

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

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- 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:

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- 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 repeatedly
  - Try shouting
  - Ensuring that a family member or neighbour has a spare key
  - Keysafe box
- Get comfortable
  - 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

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- **Keep warm**
  - Move onto a carpet, rug or soft surface if possible
  - Try to reach for a duvet cover, blanket or 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

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- 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

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- 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)

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- 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



A living room scene with a man lying on a patterned rug in the foreground, wearing a white t-shirt and dark pants. In the background, another man in a dark shirt and light pants stands near a bookshelf. The room features a leather chair, a coffee table, and a large window with a grid pattern. The text "Raizer for Private Users" is overlaid in white.

**Raizer for Private Users**



# Steady on... Stay **SAFE**



Strength



And Balance



Falls History



Environment

# Resources

- Later life training
- <https://www.fallsloop.com/uploads/Webinar%20Slide%20Decks/Backward%20Chaining%20Webinar.pdf>
- <https://fallsassistant.org.uk>
- <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/exercise/falls-prevention/>
- <https://www.rospa.com/home-safety/advice/falls-prevention/later-life>
- <https://academic.oup.com/ageing/article/51/9/afac205/6730755?login=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 ?