

Falls Prevention Education for Community Carers and Consumers



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Falls Prevention[®]
is everyone's business



Health
Northern Sydney
Local Health District

What is a fall?

- A fall is an event which results in a person inadvertently coming to rest on the ground, the floor or other lower level
- This can be from standing, bed or chair.



Falls Facts in the Community

- 1 in 3 people over the age of 65 will have a fall per year
- This increases to 1 in 2 for people 80+
- The risk of falls is greater for women than men
- Women are more likely to fall inside the house and men outside.

Common risk factors for falls

- Previous fall
- Poor mental state - either short or long term
- Unsafe mobility
- Poor balance
- Poor vision
- Incontinence
- Unsafe footwear
- Medications that can cause a fall
- Chronic health conditions
- General wellness
- Poor nutrition
- Poor hydration
- Unfamiliar environment
- Home hazards including clutter, poor lighting and pets.
- Environmental hazards in the community

Where do people fall in the community?



- **67% in the home**
- **28% in public places**



Home Environment - Falls Location

Around the Home

67% falls in the home:

- 40% inside the home (woman > men)
- 26% in the yard (men > woman)

Inside the House:

- 30% in living areas/hallways
- 20% bedroom
- 10% kitchens,
- 10% bathrooms and toilets
- Stairs 9%



Home Environment - Falls Location

In the Yard

Slippery and uneven surfaces e.g. wet moss, pebbles and leaves

- 57% garden e.g. tripping over hose left out
- 15% driveway
- 12% verandah
- 6% garage/shed
- 3% roof/tree e.g. falling off ladder

Dog injuries:

- most cases due to being struck by a dog and falling occurred >70yrs,
- 37% of injuries were caused to the knee and lower leg, with 56% fractures

Falling from a ladder

- is most common cause of DIY injury
- Most falls from a ladder were aged 65–74 year olds and 81% were male.
- Most falls from a ladder were in outdoor area for males and in the kitchen for females.

Why might *you* fall?

Internal Factors

- Medical condition
- Poor health
- Mental Health issues
- Mobility issues
- Loss of balance
- Stress/ Emotional influences
- Not enough food or drink
- Side effects of medications

Other considerations

- Unsafe Footwear
- Distracted walking
- Talking and walking using mobile phone
- Other human factors.

Why might *you* fall in the Community?

Environmental Factors

Inside Shopping Centres:

- Wet surfaces - water, oil, food
- Poor lighting
- Unfamiliar environment
- Clutter

Public Buildings:

Carparks - poor maintenance - uneven surfaces/ pot holes, poor lighting

- Foreign Objects - rubbish & food scraps

Public Footpaths/ Roadways

- Poor maintenance - uneven surfaces/ debris, pot holes
- Kerb/ gutters poorly marked

Building Entrances

- Wet surface - poor drainage/ umbrellas
- Poor lighting - predominantly at sites under development

What can *you* do?

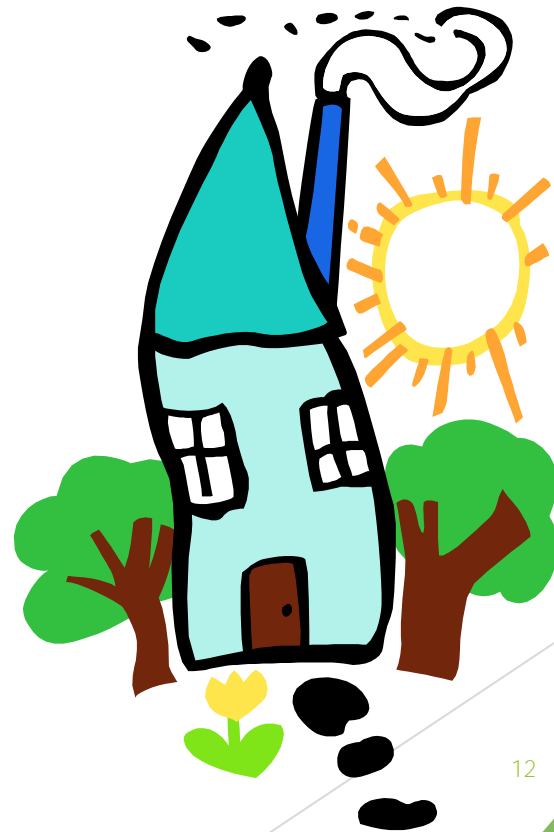
- ▶ Be aware of any falls risk factors that apply to you:
 - Your own health and emotional status on any given day,
 - Wear safe and non-slip footwear,
 - Maintain your own strength and balance,
 - Any medications that make you dizzy or light-headed
 - Distractions such as walking with mobile phone and talking,
 - Watch out for hazards inside and outside buildings/shopping centres- particularly wet floors.
 - When moving around be alert for clutter, legs of tables and chairs, equipment
 - Report any hazards or spills to shopping centre or council staff
 - Make your home safer.

FALLS PREVENTION IN THE HOME

Plan to make your home safer:

What is the hazard?

What can I do to change it?



Home Hazards

- Mats and rugs
 - Remove all loose rugs and mats or have the edges secured.
- Wet or slippery floors
 - Clean up spills as soon as they occur.
 - Dry spills are as dangerous as wet ones.
 - Use non slip flooring.



Home Hazards

- Clutter
 - Keep hallways and rooms clear of clutter.
 - Remove cords and cables from areas that are in constant use
 - Use extra powerboards or get extra powerpoints installed to reduce electrical cords
 - Clothes and shoes in the bedroom should be put away in easy reach
 - Be aware of door hangings (inward and outward opening doors)



Home Hazards

- Safe footwear and clothing
 - Non slip shoes
 - Covered-in secure shoes with a low heel.
 - **Don't wear loose fitting slippers, scuffs, thongs or socks.**
 - Especially non-slip socks provided in hospital
 - Wear clothes that fit properly - eg not too long to be a trip hazard or flowing sleeves that can catch on things



Home Hazards

- The shower and bath
 - Use a non-slip mat or anti slip flooring to prevent a fall.
 - Install handrails for support.
 - Use a bath board or shower chair for extra safety.
 - Take care with shower hobs.
 - Can get an Occupational Therapy home visit to look at options



Home Hazards

- The toilet
 - Rails beside the toilet assist to get on/off more safely
 - Raised toilet seats or toilet surrounds on low toilets can make toileting safer
 - A bedside commode for night use can be useful for those with toilets that are a distance to walk to.
 - Can get male and female urinals



Home Hazards

- Bedroom / Lounge rooms
 - Ensure good access to blinds and curtains.
 - Use a correct height, stable armchair/couch.
 - Remove mats and cords
 - Adequate height bed, with a firm mattress.
 - **Consider doona's instead of bedspreads.**
 - Put away shoes and clothes off the floor
 - Allow good access for walking aids beside beds, hallways, lounge room etc.



Home hazards



- The Kitchen

- Have regularly used items within easy reach.
- Do not climb on chairs to get objects or put away
- Ensure good lighting and ventilation.
- Make sure items can be carried safely.
- Can get a traymobile if need to carry items and use a walking aid.
- Put marker strips on the edges of shelves to make them easier to see.
- Mop up spills as soon as they occur



Home hazards

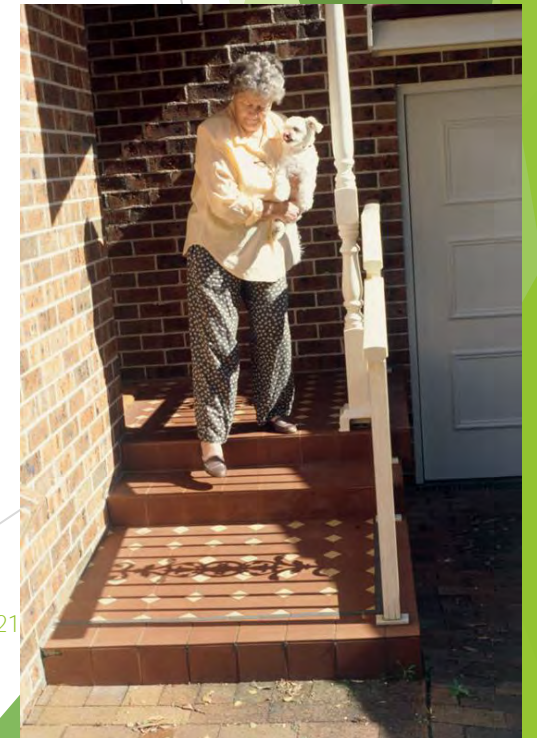
Lighting

- Have adequate lighting in all rooms: 75-100 watt globes or 15 watt compact fluorescent bulbs are recommended
- Lights should also be shielded to reduce glare.
- Have good lighting in hallways, toilets and bathrooms
- Use a night light in the bedroom, toilet, stairs and hallway for better visibility late at night.



Home Hazards

- Stairs and steps
 - Install handrails.
 - Paint the front edge of outside steps with a contrasting colour and apply adhesive non-skid strip.
 - Look at height and depth of steps.
 - Ensure stairs are in good condition.
 - Install lights at the top and bottom of stairs.
 - Put marker strips on the edges of inside stairs to make them easier to see.



Home Hazards

- The garden
 - Make sure that paths are clean, dry and even.
 - Put garden tools away when not in use to help prevent trips.
 - Roll up hoses
 - Take extra care around pets.



A word about walking aids...

Walking aids need to be properly prescribed and fitted with advice from a physiotherapist or relevant health professional.

- Speak to a health professional for individual advice on how to choose the right walking aid and use it safely.
- Do not borrow others walking aids or use from Chemist, Kmart, or ALDI etc without advice

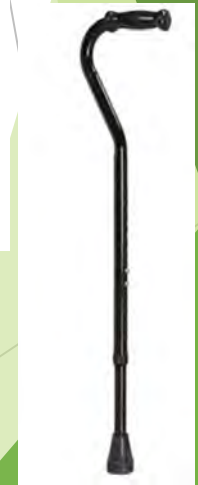
Maintenance:

- Walking sticks
 - If the stick appears damaged do not use.
 - Make sure rubber stoppers are attached securely.
 - Replace rubber stoppers if worn or damaged.

Walking frames

- If the frame appears damaged do not use.
- Check brakes, wheels, and screws regularly.

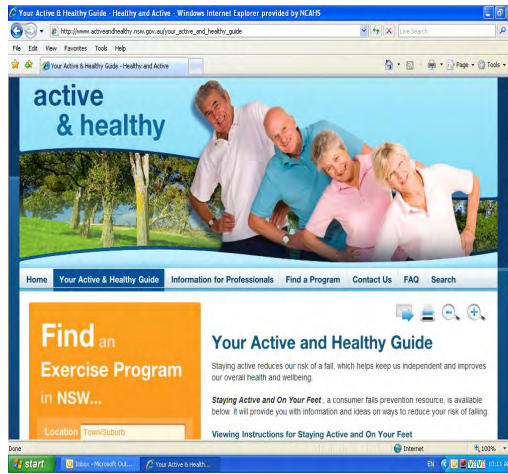
Special note re 4 wheeled walkers - *never* overload the basket or use it as a wheelchair, as they can tip over!!



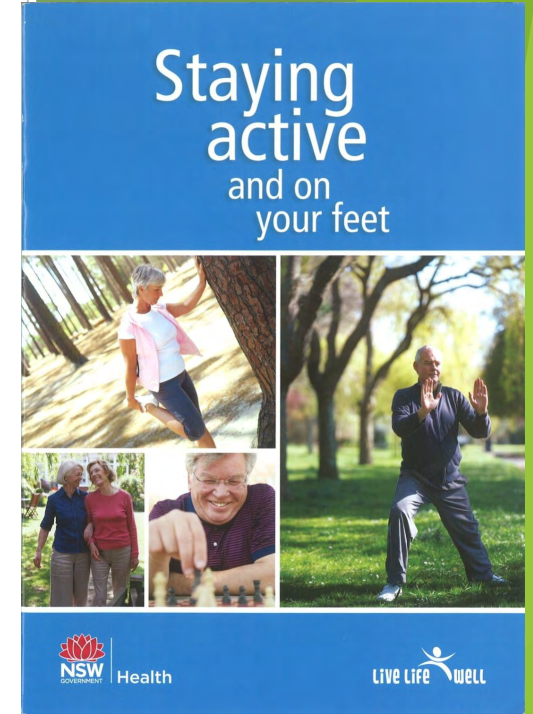
Assessment

- Home Hazards
- Occupational Therapists in The Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT), or community team located at the hospital can provide an assessment in your home and make recommendations for rails, minor home modifications and adaptive equipment.
- Walking Aids
- Physiotherapists in the ACAT, or community team located at the hospital can provide an assessment in your home or at an outpatient clinic to prescribe the best walking aid for your self or your Caree.





Falls Prevention Resources.



Stepping
On
Clemson & Swann (2017)

HEALTHY
LIFESTYLE
Get Fit • Feel Great • Have Fun

Website

www.activeandhealthy.nsw.gov.au



A State wide consumer resource for:

- *Falls Prevention and other Exercise Programs* in your local area including **‘Stepping On’** and other exercise classes
- *Staying Active and On Your Feet* publication
- Simple and essential *Home Based Exercises*
- *Health and Lifestyle* tips and checklist
- *A Home Safety Checklist*



Health
Northern Sydney
Local Health District

Stepping On

Falls Prevention Program





STEPPING ON

Stepping On is a free, exciting and friendly 7-week program for seniors that combines gentle strength and balance exercises with education sessions. It is designed to build knowledge, strength and confidence to prevent falls, stay active and remain independent.





Stepping On © Clemson and Swann 2006

Stepping On

Clemson & Swann (2017)



What is *Stepping On*?

- *Stepping On* is a free falls prevention group program for older, community dwelling people who have had a fall or are fearful of falling
- Consists of seven weekly 2 hour group falls prevention education and exercise sessions, with a booster session 2 months after completion.
- Run in community languages where possible - Mandarin and Cantonese, Korean, Italian and Spanish.



Stepping
On

Clemson & Swann (2017)

Eligibility Requirements

- The target audience is community residing residents >65 yrs including those living independently in retirement villages.
- Participants must be able to walk independently or with a walking stick
- Not generally suitable for people with dementia or ongoing neuromuscular conditions.
- Can have Carers groups where the caree can attend eg early dementia

**Stepping
On**
Clemson & Swann (2017)



Registrations and referrals

Participants can be referred by health professionals, doctors, and via self-referral.

To register for Stepping On

Call 1800 255 774 Or visit the website

<https://www.activeandhealthy.nsw.gov.au/home/stepping-on/>



HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

Get Fit • Feel Great • Have Fun



NSLHD Healthy Lifestyle Program

- Organised physical activity classes for older adults run for over 30yrs.
- Run 240 weekly classes across Northern Sydney with > 10,000 enrolments per year.
- Run by trained and accredited Fitness Leaders with older adult specialization.
- Held in Community venues across LHD (Ryde, Lower North Shore, Hornsby and Northern Beaches).
- Courses are suitable for beginners and those who exercise regularly .
- Courses cost \$120, per term. Enrol and pay by the term.



Healthy Lifestyle - classes

All classes challenge strength and promote good balance.

Options include:

- Pool - Warm Water (hydrotherapy pool), Aqua (community pool).
- Resistance exercise - Gentle Exercise, Circuit, Functional Strength, Stretch and Tone, Tone and Balance.
- Movement awareness - Pilates, Yoga and Tai Chi.
- Functional - Upright and Active (75+).
- For Falls Prevention: Yoga, Tai Chi - have been shown to be good to promote good balance and lower limb strength.
- For Frailty: Gentle Exercise, Strength Training, Upright and Active.

Enrolment -

- ▶ All participants must re-enrol each term
- ▶ Access Term brochure (www.nshealthpromotion.com.au)
- ▶ Complete Enrolment Form + Pre-Ex Screen (annual requirement)
 - ▶ Email: NSLHD-HealthyLifestyle@health.nsw.gov.au
 - ▶ Fax: 8877 5339, Phone: 9926 55 55
 - ▶ Post: Level 5, RNS CHC, 2C Herbert St, St Leonards 2065
- ▶ Classes commence at the beginning of each school term

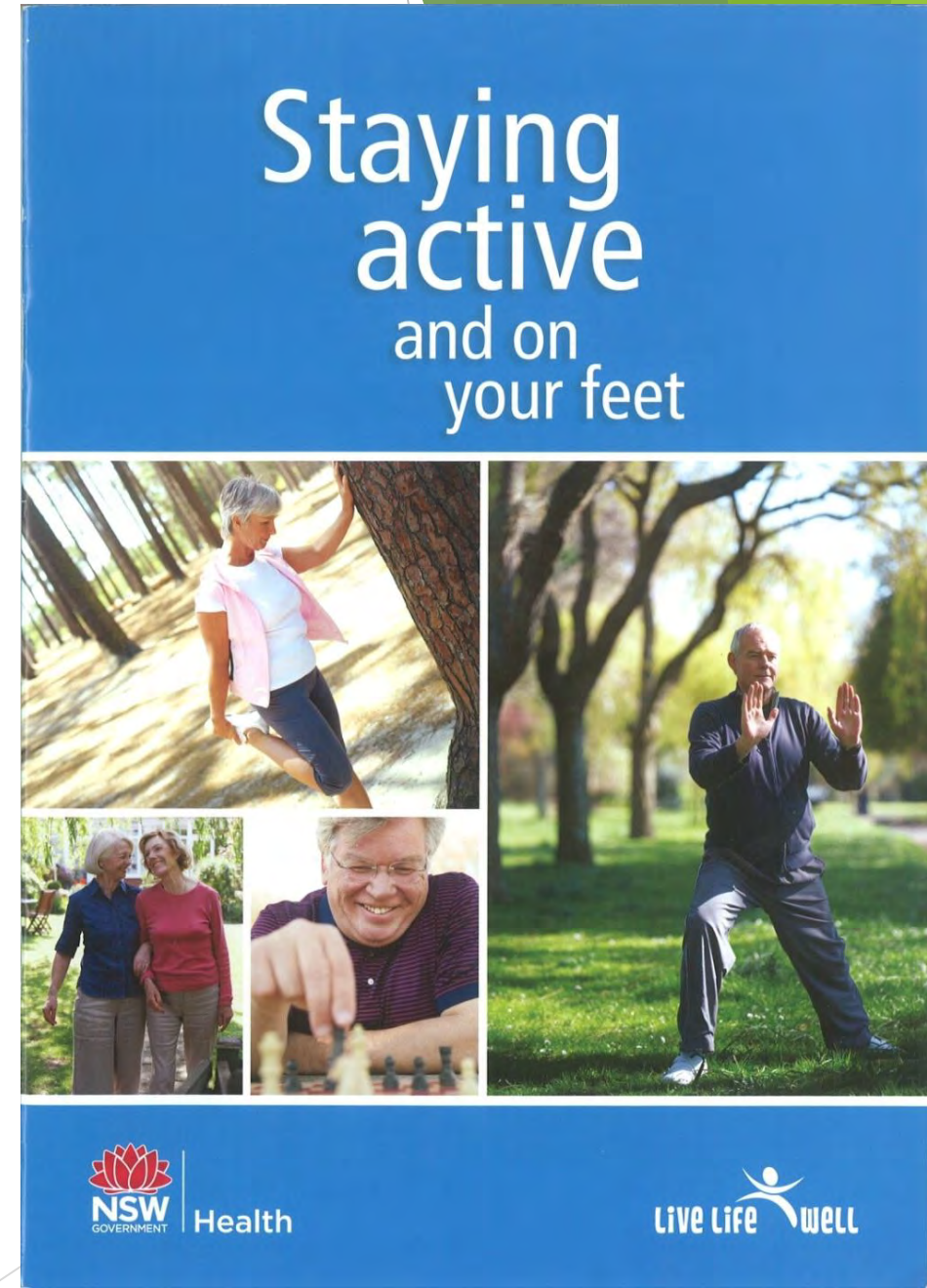
**HEALTHY
LIFESTYLE**
Get Fit • Feel Great • Have Fun

‘Staying Active and on your feet’

FREE resource booklet

This booklet can be downloaded from the Active and Healthy Website

http://www.activeandhealthy.nsw.gov.au/your_active_and_healthy_guide



Get Healthy Information & Coaching Service

START A HEALTHY DISCUSSION THAT IS ALL ABOUT YOU


Information & Coaching Service

Call 1300 806 258
Mon – Fri / 8am – 8pm

or visit
www.gethealthynsw.com.au

Free interpreter services available
 NSW Get Healthy Service

 **MAKE HEALTHY NORMAL**

- A free & confidential phone service for adults 16 years & over
- Helps with healthy eating, getting active, reaching a healthy weight, drinking less alcohol.
- Modules/programs: Standard program *Type 2 Diabetes Prevention*, Aboriginal, Pregnancy, Alcohol reduction, Chinese Coaching
- 10 confidential motivational/support coaching calls over 6 months (by trained health professionals eg. Nutritionists, nurses, exercise physiologists) to meet own goals
- **Search ‘Get Healthy’ on NSLHD Intranet for information/outcomes/referral forms.**
www.nshealthpromotion.com.au
- Or visit www.gethealthynsw.com.au

For further Information
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