

# Falls: assessment and prevention in older people and in people 50 and over at higher risk

Information for the public

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[www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)

## Falls

Falls can occur at any age, but they become more of a concern for older people, especially people aged 65 and over. There is also an increased risk of falling among people who are aged 50 to 64 with other risk factors, for example, a long-term condition such as arthritis, dementia, diabetes or Parkinson's disease.

There are lots of things that people can do to stay steady on their feet and avoid having a fall, even if they have had a fall in the past.

We want this guideline to make a difference by helping people avoid falls wherever they live, for example, for people who live in their own home or a care or nursing home, or for people during a hospital stay. This involves:

- Identifying who is at risk of falls and finding out whether there are any factors that increase their risk. For example, a person may have sight problems caused by a cataract and as a result, they may have a fall if they cannot see properly – or they may be taking a medicine that makes them feel dizzy.
- Helping people reduce their risk of having a fall, for example, by referring someone to an eye specialist if they have cataracts, or reviewing the medicines that a person is taking, as well as reviewing any long-term conditions.
- Helping people stay steady on their feet by maintaining or improving their strength and balance by staying active and doing simple exercises.
- Giving people information about what they can do to prevent a fall.

## Making decisions together

Decisions about treatment and care are best when they are made together. Your healthcare professionals should give you clear information, talk with you about your options and listen carefully to your views and concerns. They should also:

- provide advice and support, and details of where to find reliable information
- take into account your needs, preferences and circumstances in discussions and when providing information.

If you need more support to understand the information you are given, tell your healthcare professional.

Read more about [making decisions about your care](#).

## Where can I find out more?

These organisations can give you more advice and support.

- Age UK, 0800 678 1602. For advice and information, see [Age UK's health and wellbeing information on preventing falls](#).
- Carer Rights UK, 0207 359 8136. For advice and information, contact [Carer Right UK's advice line](#).
- The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA), 0121 248 2107 or email [publichealth@rospa.com](mailto:publichealth@rospa.com). For advice and information, see [ROSPA's Falls prevention hub's personal falls advice](#).

There is also [NHS information about falls and how to prevent them](#).

Also see NHS information and specific patient organisations' websites for reliable information and resources on understanding, managing and living with long-term conditions that increase the risk of falls.

To share an experience of care you have received, contact your local [Healthwatch](#).

NICE is not responsible for the content of these websites.

We wrote this guideline with people who have been affected by falls and staff who treat and support them. All the decisions are based on the best research available.

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