

## In case of emergency



- Keep emergency numbers in large print near each phone;
- Think about getting an alarm device that will call for help in case you fall and cannot get up.

Doctor

Out of Hours

Hospital

Ambulance

Neighbour

Garda Station

If you have fallen already you might be more likely to fall again. If you have a fall, even a minor one, make sure you visit your GP for a check up. Also, make sure you eat regular hot meals and drink plenty of fluids. This will keep you warm and will give you energy to keep active.

**Remember, falls are preventable**

For further information please contact the Winter Information Line  
**1850 241850**

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# Keep Safe this Winter



## Preventing Falls and Trips

**As you get older, a fall can result in broken bones, but also in loss of confidence, loss of mobility and fear of leaving your home. Many falls can be prevented, and by making small changes you can lower your chances of falling.**

## 1: Keep active and exercise

- Regular physical activity makes you stronger and improves your balance and coordination;
- Most adults over 65 should try to keep active. Even if you have chronic illness such as heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes or arthritis there is a certain level of activity to suit you. Many of these conditions will improve with exercise.
- Begin slowly and start with exercises you feel comfortable doing;
- Start with walking. You can slowly increase the distance you walk.
- Ask your doctor if you are unsure what activities or exercises are best for you;
- Wear loose, comfortable clothing and well-fitted sturdy shoes;

## 2: Ask your GP to review your medicines

- As you get older you may need to change the dose of your medicines. Some medicines or combinations of medicines may make you feel faint or light-headed which could lead to a fall. Please check with your GP for advice.

## 3: Have your vision checked

- Your eyesight changes as you get older. Poor vision can increase your chances of falling. Make sure you get your eye-sight checked on a regular basis.

## 4: Fall prevention - in each room

### Floors



- Arrange furniture so that you can easily move around all your rooms;
- Keep the floors clear from papers and books etc. that could cause you to trip;
- Remove rugs or use non-slip tape or backing so rugs will not slip;
- Make sure wires or cords from lamps, telephones etc. do not trail where you walk.

### Stairs and Steps



- Fix loose or uneven steps
- Do not leave shoes or books on steps of stairs;
- Have a light switch fitted at the top and bottom of the stairs. As you get older you need brighter lights to see well;
- Install hand rails on both sides of the stairs; making sure they reach the top.

### Bathroom



- Fit grab rails next to your toilet, bath and shower;
- Use a non-slip mat in the bath or shower.

### Kitchen



- Keep items you use often within easy reach;
- If you need to reach high shelves use a steady step stool rather than a chair.

### Bedroom



- Place a lamp close to your bed where it is easy to reach;
- Make sure there is a light between your bedroom and the bathroom;
- Have a phone extension fitted in your bedroom.
- Wear a personal alarm, check with your public health nurse, doctor or local Garda for further information.