

Herefordshire Falls Prevention Service

Information leaflet: Staying Steady

Herefordshire Falls Prevention Service is a free NHS service for older people who have fallen, are at risk of or are worried about falling, or who have concerns about their balance.



Herefordshire Falls Prevention Service

Falls are not an inevitable part of getting older, and many falls can be prevented with the right help and support. At the Falls Prevention Service we can help people to:

- Identify potential causes of falls
- Make changes to reduce the risk of falls and injuries
- Improve strength, balance, mobility and dizziness
- Regain confidence
- Maintain independence
- Know how to cope in the event of a fall

Our specialist team of physiotherapists, occupational therapist and therapy assistant practitioners provide clinics locally throughout Herefordshire for:

- Initial assessment to identify the cause of falls
- Individual advice and information about keeping steady, active, and safe at home
- Tailored exercise programmes to improve strength, balance and mobility
- Onwards referral to a range of specialist services, as required

We are also able to offer home environment assessments for people who may have concerns about falls risks in their home environment.

Getting in touch

If you are concerned about falling and would like some advice, the Falls Prevention Service is available to any adult living in the community.

To access the service, please tell a health professional if you have had a fall or are concerned about your balance, we accept referrals from all health and care professionals.

It is also possible to refer yourself into the service using our self-referral form, available from our webpage or by contacting our office directly via the contact details on the back of this leaflet.

8 top tips for staying steady

1. Keep active and avoid sitting for long periods

- Physical activity helps to improve mobility, strength, balance, coordination and stamina
- Consider a walking aid if you lack confidence

2. Manage your medications

- Ask your GP or pharmacist to review your medications yearly
- Report any side effects, including feeling faint, dizzy or unsteady

3. Look after your eyes

- Have your eyesight checked at least every 2 years
- Multifocal glasses can affect your perception of objects, distances and heights, so take particular care with stairs and steps, uneven pavements and kerbs

4. Manage your health

- Eat regularly and chose a varied range of foods each day
- Aim to drink at least 8 cups of fluid each day
- If you experience dizziness, or have ever lost consciousness or blacked out, talk to your GP or health professional

5. Look after your bones

- Eat a well-balanced diet including foods that are rich in calcium and vitamin D
- Keep active, including weight bearing exercise such as walking
- Limit alcohol intake and smoking

6. Look after your feet

- Ensure your shoes and slippers are in good condition and fit well
- Have your toe nails cut regularly

7. Improve your home safety

- Check for and move things that could cause you to slip or trip
- Consider handrails on both sides of the stairs, or at steps, doorways, or in the bathroom
- Keep your home well lit, especially the stairs and landing
- Turn on a light when getting out of bed at night
- Keep warm: cold muscles do not work so well
- Take time when getting up from lying to sitting or from sitting to standing

8. If you have had a fall, or feel anxious about falling

- Speak to someone; a health professional, family member or carer
- Taking action to reduce risk of falls, such as in this leaflet, can help improve confidence
- Consider making an action plan for how to cope in the event of a fall, with support from a family member or carer

What to do if you have a fall

STOP, THINK, PLAN AND ATTRACT HELP

- Use your pendant alarm or mobile phone
- Bang on the floor or wall or shout
- Crawl to a telephone if able
- Try to get up if you feel you can

KEEP WARM

- Cover yourself with anything to hand, such as a towel, coat, rug, or blanket

KEEP MOVING

- Move the parts of your body that don't hurt
- Move to a dry space if you relieve your bladder
- Try to crawl to a softer floor if lying on a hard floor

Contact details

Falls Prevention Service
Leominster Community Hospital
South Street
Leominster
HR6 8JH

Telephone: 01568 617309 (Monday to Friday 9:30-13:30)

E-mail: fallsreferrals@nhs.net

Webpage: www.wyevalley.nhs.uk (services / community services / falls)

How to provide feedback

Our aim is to provide a quality of care we would want for ourselves, our families and friends. If there was anything that we could have done please let us know via the department/ward staff or the patient experience team available on 01432 372986 or email PALs@wvt.nhs.uk (opening times may vary).

This leaflet is available in large print, Braille, Audio tape or other languages upon request. Please contact patient experience team on the above telephone number.

You may be asked to give your opinion on the service you have received. We welcome your feedback as this will help us to improve the care and treatment we provide to our patients.

Wye Valley NHS Trust www.wyevalley.nhs.uk

Telephone 01432 355444