



# Stepping On

building confidence and reducing falls  
a community-based program for older people

Hand outs & Resources



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## The Apple Game Quiz: Home fall hazards

Use this quiz to generate discussion and problem solving. It is adapted from the Apple Game (Petch & Smith, 1998). They gave apples, which symbolize health and, in Chinese communities, stand for safety and healthiness.

### Choose what you think is the answer that will best help prevent a fall for you.

What do you do, what could you do?

What might be the barriers, and,

What would make it easier to follow through and do it?

### To answer my phone, I:

- a) Go as fast as I can in case they hang up.
- b) Carefully check that the route to the phone is free of clutter.
- c) Move slowly and carefully. I leave a window open to hear the phone when I'm-outside.
- d) Don't worry if I don't make it. I press \*10# to find out who the last caller was. (Note the recall code differs between carriers.)
- e) Asked for a cordless phone for my birthday.

### I place my heater in winter:

- a) In front of my easy chair to keep me warm.
- b) Right out of the way of where I walk.
- c) Near the wall but with the cord across the floor.

### In the bedroom, I:

- a) Let the bedclothes trail over the edge of the bed.
- b) Check the floor space and the route where I walk for clutter.
- c) Leave the cord from the television across the floor.
- d) Leave my shoes in front of the window that I open most frequently.

### To make the steps safer, I:

- a) Go down as quickly as possible.
- b) Get a rail installed.
- c) Improve the lighting at the beginning and end of the stairs.
- d) Don't leave clutter on the steps.

### So that I don't fall over a cord across the floor, I:

- a) Do not use extension leads.
- b) Put tape over the extension lead.
- c) Rearrange the furniture so the cord is not across the floor.
- d) Use extra leads so they go further.
- e) Tape or clip the lead to the walls so that it is not on the floor.



**To make the outside pathways safer, I:**

- a) Get the bushes cut back to clear the path.
- b) Use an "anti-moss" product from the hardware store.
- c) Don't go outside alone.
- d) Get someone to angle-grind the uneven sections so they are even.

**When I get up at night, I:**

- a) Never switch on a night-light.
- b) Have a 'touch' lamp beside the bed.
- c) Leave a torch beside the bed.
- d) Have plugged in a "photosensitive" light somewhere along the route to the toilet.

**To change a light bulb, I:**

- a) Use a stepladder with a firm base and a safety rail to hold onto.
- b) Use the kitchen stool to climb on.
- c) Put the dining chair on the table and climb up.
- d) Ask someone else to do it.

**To make sure the pets are not hazardous, I:**

- a) Feed the pets by the backdoor just where I walk out.
- b) Get rid of the pet because I might trip over it.
- c) Shut them up in the back room at times when I'm really busy.
- d) When I go out the back door I make sure that my dog is not in the way of the steps.

**My favorite chair:**

- a) Has lots of soft and slippery cushions to make it cozy.
- b) Has a footstool in front of the chair to put my feet on.
- c) Has a mat in front of the chair to stop the carpet wearing.
- d) Is high enough and has good armrests for standing up easily, or
- e) Is a challenging height for me and reminds me to do my sit-to-stand exercises.

**To stop me tripping or slipping on a mat, I:**

- a) Remove all floor mats.
- b) Tack or tape down all mats.
- c) Use purple mats as they are less slippery.
- d) Use a slip-resistant underlay with slippery mats.

**To make the kitchen floor safer, I:**

- a) Remove all mats.
- b) Wipe up spills straight away.
- c) Buy a heavy slip-resistant mat.
- d) Always have bare feet so I can feel the slippery patches.

**To make it safer on dim days and at night, I:**

- a) Increase the wattage of the bulbs I buy.
- b) Paint the walls a contrasting color so I can see the furniture.
- c) Wear dark sunglasses.
- d) Move furniture out of walkways.

**To make it safer when moving about, I:**

- a) Pause when going from a dim room to a well lit area.
- b) Paint the edge of steps with a contrasting strip.
- c) Always wear my bifocals when walking around the house.
- d) Get infra-red glasses for night time walks.

**To move safely from the kitchen to my lounge chair, I:**

- a) Have lots of furniture and things to hold onto.
- b) Get rid of my old large dining table as it is too big and the chairs are in the way.
- c) Leave the low coffee table with splayed legs in the middle of the room.

**Reaching to high shelves, I:**

- a) Have my most used items in easy reach.
- b) Use my walking stick to pull down things I can't reach.
- c) Have higher shelves painted a darker color.
- d) Put down on a lower shelf the things I often have to reach up for.

**To make my bath safer, I:**

- a) Use a rubber bath mat inside the bath.
- b) Install grab bars.
- c) Get rid of my bath and put in a shower recess.
- d) Paint my bath yellow because this is a safe color.

**To make my bathroom floor safer, I:**

- a) Remove all the mats.
- b) Replace the mats frequently when worn.
- c) Paint floor with a non-slip substance so it is less slippery when wet.
- d) Always wear stockings or socks in the bathroom.

**When I don't need my cane, I:**

- a) Put it down against the nearest wall or table.
- b) Always check it is safely placed so that I won't trip over it.
- c) Use a "cane-holder" when I go out.



## Apple Game Quiz: Revision

Adapted from Petch & Smith (1998)

Use this quiz to generate discussion and problem solving.

**Choose what you think is the answer that will best help prevent a fall for you.**

What do you do, what could you do?

What might be the barriers, and

What would make it easier to follow through and do it?

### Community safety

When I am in a hurry and have to cross a busy street, I:

- a) Cross in the middle of the block so I don't waste time going to the light and crossing.
- b) Take the extra time to go to the light and cross on a fresh green light.**
- c) Go to the light and cross on the red if there are no cars coming.

### Medication management

Research has proven that taking sedatives does cause falls. So, to help me get a good night's sleep instead of taking sedatives, I:

- a) Don't have a bedtime ritual – I do something different each night before I go to sleep.
- b) Have a clock beside the bed and check the time every time I wake up.
- c) Go to bed only when I'm ready for sleeping.**
- d) Am not very active.
- e) Drink lots of coffee at teatime and with supper

To prevent falls caused by the kinds of medications I take, I:

- a) Don't want to ask my GP to review my medications, because he might think I doubt his memory.
- b) Never ask my GP about the side effects of medications. He would tell me if I needed to know.
- c) When I have new medications that might have side effects I rearrange my diary so I can take extra care for a couple of days.**
- d) Don't have time to sit and chat with the chemist, though my neighbor tells me he has found a friendly chemist who will take the time to tell him about any side effects.

To prevent falls caused by how I take my medications, I:

- a) Always take my medications after a meal because that's just what I have always done.
- b) Never throw any medications out, just in case I might need them.
- c) Have an infallible memory – I never double up on my medications.
- d) Always carefully check when, how often, and with what foods I need to take my medications.**

## Vision and Falls

To make sure my vision doesn't contribute to falls, I:

- a) Won't do anything about my cataracts just yet, though I know they're not good.
- b) Always wear my bifocals or trifocals over steps or stairs.
- c) Have my eyes checked once a year.**
- d) Don't clean my glasses regularly.
- e) Buy 25 watt globes because it saves me money on my power bill.

## Footwear

When I buy new shoes, I:

- a) Check the soles to see if they are non-slip.**
- b) Buy the most expensive shoes because they must be safe.
- c) Buy shoes with leather soles.

When I buy new shoes I think about:

- a) Slip, slop, and slap.
- b) Support, Fit, and Sole.**
- c) Good leg to heaven and bad leg to hell.

## References

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Petch, E., & Smith, E. (1998). Home safe home road show. Injury prevention for seniors in the community. Toronto, Ont.: South Riverdale Community Health Centre & Home Safe Committee of Toronto.

When out walking,  
look ahead to be  
aware, and walk  
heel-toe



Use this publicity flyer to promote the program

# Stepping On, falls prevention for the over 70s



A new program, supported by

## What you can do

Join us and become part of a program to reduce falls. Help us to help you and others who have had a fall or are at risk.

## What we can provide

Occupational therapist

and other local experts will teach about many aspects of falls prevention, including some simple exercises that reduce your risk of falling.

## Best practice

The Stepping On program is based on the latest research, both local and overseas.

## Venue/transport

Recruitment is starting in \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ is providing a venue and

if you are offered the program, we can help you arrange transport if needed.

## How to find out more

Contact \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

or write to \_\_\_\_\_

## Reply slip

If writing, tear this slip off and send it to us at the address above.

I have had a fall or am very concerned about falling, am 70 or over, and want to know more-about the fall prevention program.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

# overheads

The following can be made into overheads or posters for use in the group sessions.

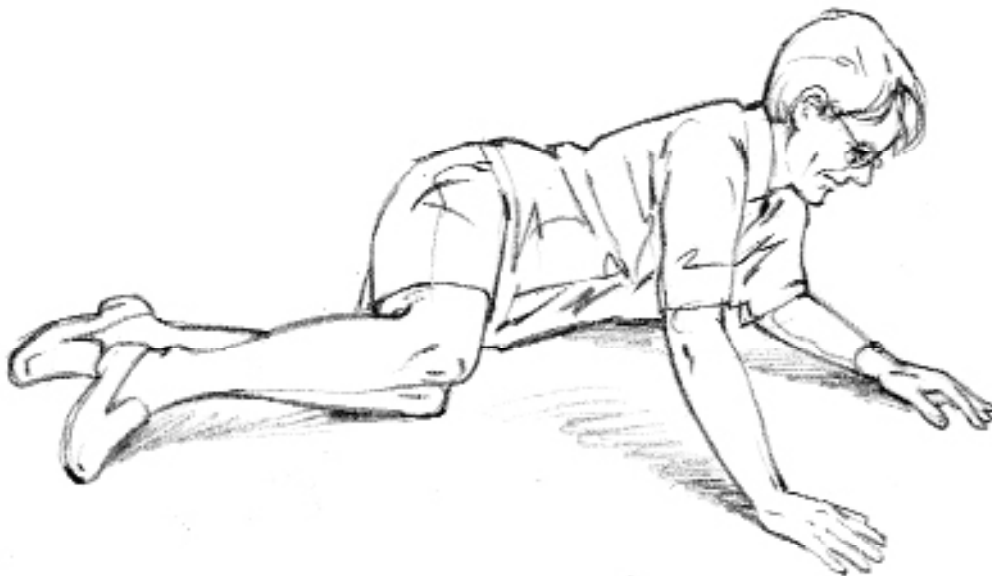
- Getting up from a fall
- Safe clothing
- Safe footwear
- Vitamin D overhead 1
- Vitamin D overhead 2



# getting up from a fall

## Don't panic and take your time

- **Bend up both knees**
- **Roll onto side**
- **Onto one elbow and extend arm**
- **From side sitting to kneeling**
- **Crawl to chair and up**



## safe clothing is when...

- Loose robes are wrapped around snugly and loose belts and ties are fastened securely.
- No wide and open pockets stick out and catch doorknobs or furniture.
- Sleeves are not too long, too open or too wide.

**Think safety when you purchase clothes**

**Think safety when you wear dressing gowns and robes**



# safe footwear



# vitamin D, calcium and hip fracture



## Sunlight

is best source of Vitamin D

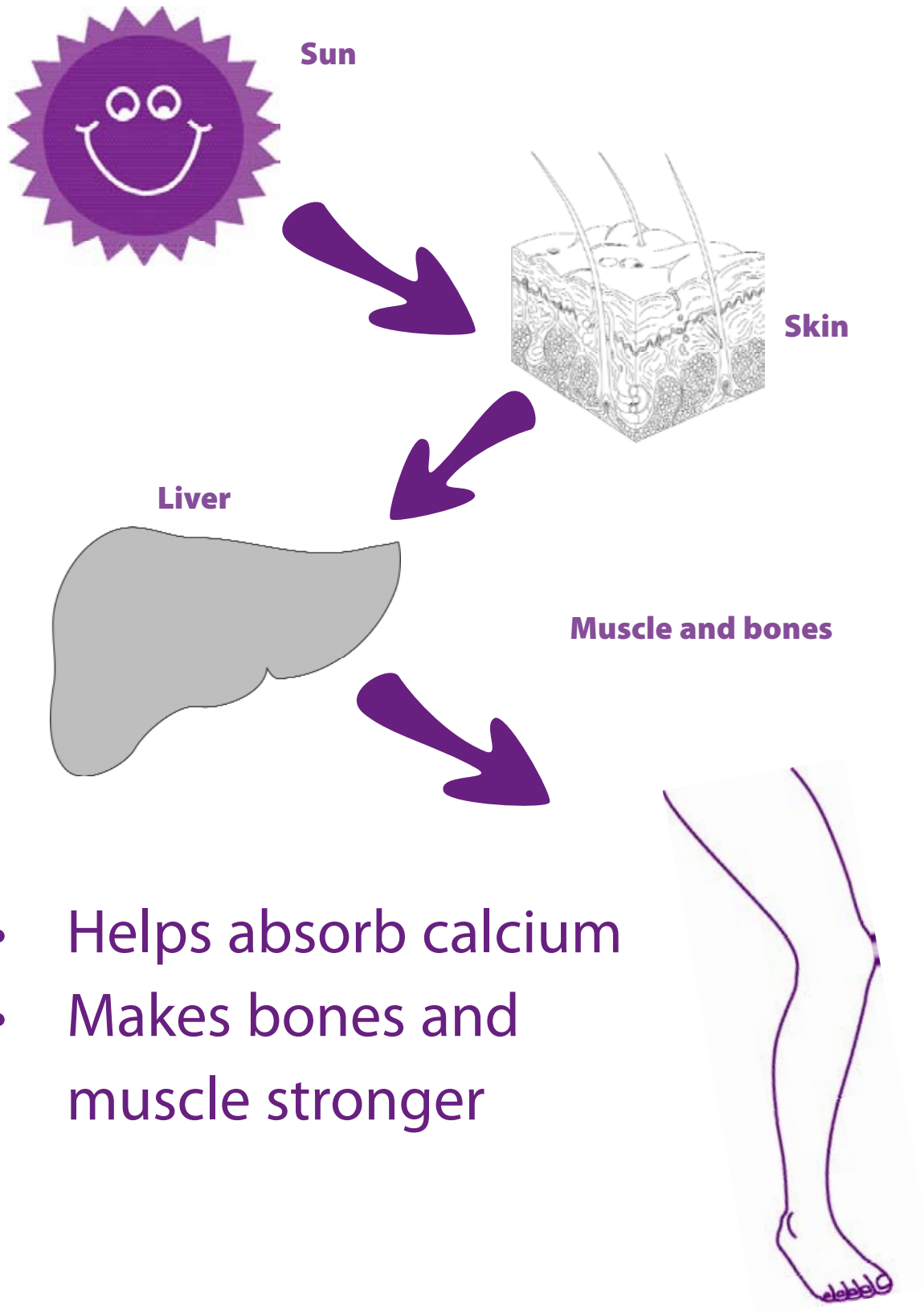
- helps prevent hip fracture
- increases bone mass
- increases muscle strength

## How much sunlight?

- 20 minutes
- three times a week



# vitamin D, calcium and hip fracture



- Helps absorb calcium
- Makes bones and muscle stronger

# handouts and brochures

Copies of these handouts and brochures can be printed for the participants. Exercise charts are used weekly to self-monitor and assist follow through. These can be printed in a different bright colour for each week. The brochures can be used as an adjunct to learning for those who wish to use them. These should be printed in soft colours. See Resources for each session in the Program chapter which indicated when they are needed.

- Shopping list
- Moving about safely
- Exercise chart
- Walking stick safety
- Getting up from a fall handout
- Products for slippery surfaces
- Moving about safely
- Shoe audit
- What is a safe, comfortable shoe? Support, Fit, Heel and Sole
- Vision and falls
- Sun chart
- Sleep Better
- Bus with safety
- Train travel safety
- Taking care against bag snatchers
- Strength and balance exercises to prevent falls Participant Manual



# shopping list

Topics we can include in the program

✓ Tick if interested

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weak legs                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Public transport                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Balance                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Uneven ground                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hurrying and not paying attention | <input type="checkbox"/> Steps and stairs                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Footwear                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Lifting and carrying                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feet                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Vision                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cords across the floor            | <input type="checkbox"/> Holding onto things to move about         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reaching                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Doing things up high                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loneliness                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Not enough help                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Standing up and feeling giddy     | <input type="checkbox"/> Fear of doing things and falling          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Getting up at night               | <input type="checkbox"/> "Hip protectors"                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Toilet at night                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Vitamin D and Calcium to strengthen bones |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slippery bath                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Crime e.g. bag snatching                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Floor coverings                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Medications                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Uneven footpaths                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping tablets                          |

ADD ANY OTHERS:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# moving about safely

## goal setting

I am interested in (✓ tick which ones):

- Crossing a road
- Climbing a gutter
- Walking up a slope
- Different surfaces
- Walking outside
- Shopping
- Catch bus or train
- Walking around house
- Around the garden
- What else? \_\_\_\_\_

Better balance  
and stronger leg  
muscles will protect  
against falls



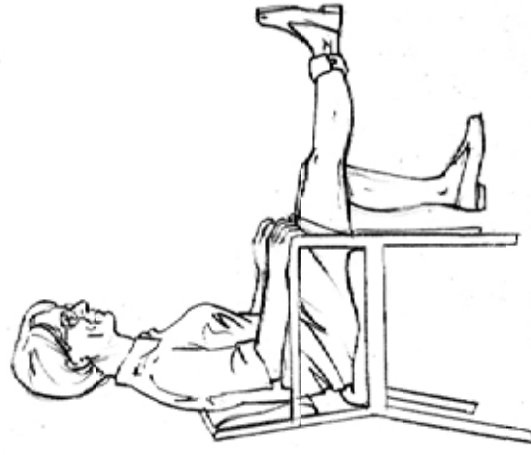
## exercise plan

✓ Tick if I have done my exercises three days this week

Monday

Wednesday

Friday



# walking stick safety

## **General principles for using a walking stick safely:**

- Your stick should be adjusted for your height. The hand grip should be level with your wrist when your arm is at your side.
- Use your stick in the opposite hand to your affected or weaker leg. Bring it forward with your weaker leg.
- Renew the rubber stopper when it is worn. Have a look at the end of your stick now.
- Apply luminous tape for others to see when dim or dark.

## Remember:

- Walk with your legs a little wider apart to make ramps and slopes easier.
- On the stairs or gutter:  
Step up first with your stronger leg.  
Step down first with your weaker leg.



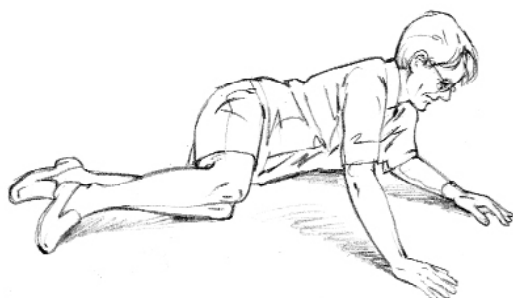
# getting up from a fall

**Don't panic and take your time**

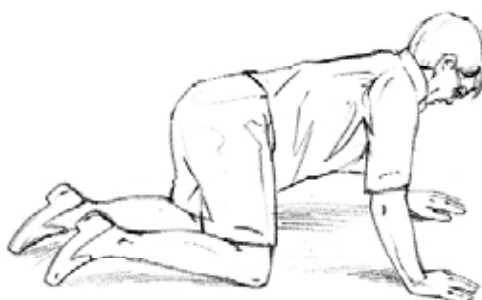


**1. Bend up both your knees**

**2. Roll onto one side**



**3. Push up onto one elbow**



**4. Move into a kneeling position on hands and knees**

**5. Stop and get your balance**



**6. Crawl to a phone on a low table or to a chair**

**7. Using both hands, pull yourself up**

# products for slippery surfaces

## Getting rid of moss and mildew on paths and steps

1. A product called "30 SECONDS" gets rid of algae, moss, mould and mildew.
2. Buy a spray bottle. Mix one part water to one part 30 Seconds and spray on a dry surface.
3. Then, after 15 minutes, use the hose to wash off.

## Other similar products

Anti moss, Mould Stop and Once a Year Path Weeder OR general cleaners like Chlorine or CLR.

## Prevent slips on step edges

3M Safety Walk – Step and Ladder Strips are treads that can be stuck on the step edges.

## Anti-slip products for tiles, concrete and timber floors

1. SLIP GRIP can be used on tiled surfaces. It needs three coats.
2. Berger Jet Dry and Tredgrip are non-slip paints for concrete and timber. They can be used on steps as well.
3. For a commercial application of anti-slip products contact One-Step on 02 9814 8435.

## Prevent slips inside the home

1. Mop up spills straight away.
2. Increase the grip on slippery tiles with a slip resistant product.



3. Use double-sided tape to stick down mats. There are different types for mat on carpet and for mat on floor.

## Anti-slip shower and bath

### NON-SLIP STRIPS

These are available from hardware shops in packets. Pull off the backing and stick to surface.

### SHOWER AND BATH MATS

1. Rubber-suction mats from department stores or chemists. Should be hung up daily to air and need to be replaced regularly.
2. Anti-fungal slip-resistant shower mat. Just wipe with soap and water every six months. Available from Wallace GB 9955 4316

For help with slippery surfaces contact your local council handyman service or occupational therapist. For further information on these and other products contact the Independent Living Centre 9808 2233 or visit them on the web at [www.ilcnsw.asn.au](http://www.ilcnsw.asn.au)

## Taking care not to slip when outdoors

1. On the grass be aware of holes, dips and rocks.
2. Scan ahead as you walk.
3. Wear sturdy shoes and use the handrails.
4. Crossing at the lights, remember the flashing "don't walk" sign means you can continue your crossing.
5. Take care or don't go out in windy weather.

# moving about safely

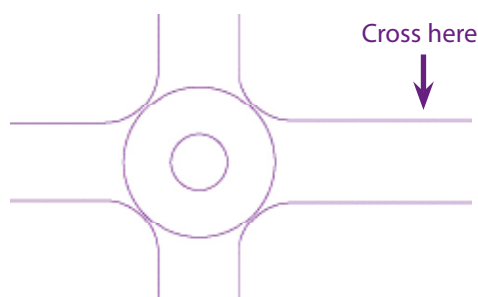
## Outdoor walking

### BE ALERT TO HAZARDS

1. Cracks and uneven footpaths.
2. On the grass be aware of holes, dips and rocks.
3. Scan ahead as you walk.
4. Heel-and-toe as you walk.
5. Keep your head up, chin in and shoulders back. This helps you to look ahead and walk with confidence.

## Safely getting about in the community

1. Wear sturdy shoes.
2. Use the handrails.
3. Crossing at the lights, remember the flashing "don't walk" sign means you can continue your crossing.
4. Make eye contact with the driver before you cross the road, even on a pedestrian crossing.
5. Cross the road with a group.
6. Be extra careful in windy weather.
7. Wear light coloured clothing and carry a yellow or light coloured umbrella.
8. Roundabouts. It's safer to cross further down the road than at the roundabout.



9. If you feel unsteady remember to ask for help – it's a sign of strength, not weakness.
10. Plan ahead for outings so that you don't have to rush.

## Keep doing your balance and strength exercises to keep safe outdoors

### Remember

#### ON THE STAIRS OR GUTTER

1. Step up first with your stronger leg.
2. Step down first with your weaker leg.
3. Walk with your legs wider to make ramps and slopes easier.

#### WALKING STICK SAFETY

General principles for using a walking stick safely

1. Stick height. Your stick should be adjusted for your height.
2. Use your stick in the opposite hand to your affected or weaker leg.
3. Renew the rubber stopper when it is worn.

Challenge  
your balance it will  
improve.  
Keep doing it and you  
won't lose it

# shoe audit

Support

Fit

Sole

Heel



---

# shoe audit

Support

Fit

Sole

Heel



---

This handout has been doubled up so that you make two copies per A4 page.  
Trim on the dotted lines.



# what is a safe, comfortable shoe?



## **A supportive shoe**

- Firm arch support
- Sole that is flexible under ball of foot and not too thick
- Covers most of foot
- A lightweight shoe
- Roomy toe box for comfort
- Lace or velcro fastenings for stability

## **A good fit**

- At least 1.2cm (half inch) between longest toe and inside of shoe
- Holds foot well back into shoe
- Snug, firm grip at heel counter

## **A sole that grips**

- Non-slip rubber sole
- Textured for grip, with broken border

## **A heel that is stable AND grips**

- Non-slip and textured
- Low heel (less than 3.5 to 5 cm)
- Bevelled heel
- Broad heel (at least 5.5. cm) with rounded edge

# the slippery sam award

**Use this as your template**



# vision and falls

## Have your eyes checked at least every two years

### VISION

We all get used to living with "not quite" perfect eyesight – we learn to live with it. So:

1. Have your eyes checked at least every two years with an eye specialist or optometrist. Many of us would see much better with new glasses.
2. Clean your glasses regularly. They get very dirty just by being used. This can be done with soap or detergent in the kitchen, wash basin, or even in the shower. You'll be amazed at the difference.

### MOVING AROUND AND ABOUT

1. When walking look about six steps ahead to give you time to adjust your steps to potential hazards.
2. When coming from outside to inside – wait till your eyes adjust before coming in. Take sunglasses off when coming inside.

### LIGHTING

Buy 75 or 100 wattage globes. Using lower wattage light globes won't save on power bills.

## AT HOME

1. Clutter can make seeing hazards more difficult. Make sure your hallways, porches, and verandahs are free from unnecessary items. Don't use thoroughfares as storage areas.
2. Get rid of furniture with casters like mobile TV stands or wide legs like table legs that can stick out and intrude into the traffic ways where you walk. Get rid of those sausage-shaped draught excluders used to put under doors.
3. Check that there is enough colour contrast between furniture and walls/curtains. For example, a white coffee table on a white carpet is easy to trip over.

## CATARACTS

If you have cataracts and have had a fall see your doctor and talk about an early referral for cataract treatment. Cataracts can make it difficult to see when moving about and research shows a link between cataracts and falls. Some lighting conditions, such as glare, can also make it more difficult to see with cataracts.

## BIFOCALS & MULTIFOCALS

Bifocals are good for seeing long and short distances at the same time. However, they make step edges, paving edges, gutters and stairs inside and outside, difficult to see. Be wary and learn to adjust your head to see. Indoors, it may be satisfactory to take bifocals off when going up steps or stairs.



## NIGHT VISION

At night if your vision is worse, (because for example, you don't have glasses on) then your balance can be worse. You may also become disorientated in the dark. It is important to use some kind of lighting at night. Photosensitive lights that plug into the power point can help light up a walkway. These can be bought at supermarkets. Touch lamps, bedside lights and torches are a good idea. Install light switches at the top and bottom of stairways.

## IF GLARE IS A PROBLEM

1. Buy cheap netting or lace curtains to cover windows to shield from the sun in summer.
2. Reduce glare by checking for reflective surfaces and unshielded light bulbs.
3. Halogen lighting gives a bright but diffuse lighting and can reduce glare.
4. Wear a hat outside and wear sunglasses suitable for your eye condition.

## LOW VISION CLINIC

The Low Vision Clinic is a service available from:

Guide Dogs Association, NSW: Chatswood,  
Phone: 9412-9300 [www.guidedogs.com.au](http://www.guidedogs.com.au)

Royal Blind Society, NSW: Enfield, Phone: 9334 3333

University of NSW, NSW: Randwick, Phone: 9385 4624

An Orthoptist can give you eye exercises and low vision aids to make best use of your vision.

**Wear your glasses and have regular check ups.**

## sun time check list

I have had 20 minutes in  
the sun on:  
(Tick which days)

- Monday
- Tuesday
- Wednesday
- Thursday
- Friday
- Saturday
- Sunday

Target: 3 - 4 days  
per week



# sleep better

## Sleeping Pills

It is best to avoid taking sleeping pills if you can. The side effects of taking sleeping pills for a long time can be:

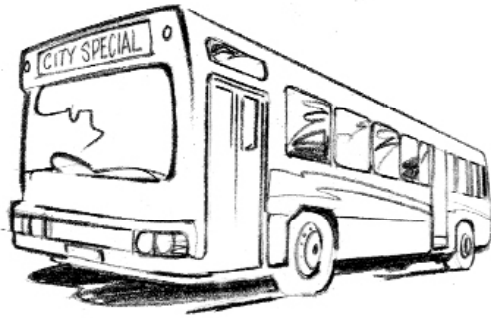
- Daytime hangover effects
- Daytime sleepiness
- Falls and confusion
- More sleep problems

## How to sleep better

1. Go to bed when you are ready to sleep. Current research has shown that just going to bed half an hour later can work.
2. Have a bedtime ritual – do the same thing each night.
3. Avoid coffee and other drinks and foods with stimulants.
4. Regular exercise is very important.
5. If you cannot sleep at night then read or do some quiet activity. This works best if you don't stay in bed. Get up if you can — if it's not too cold.
6. Avoid daytime naps.
7. Keep the bedroom just for sleeping – and sexual activity.
8. Keep clock faces turned away and try not to check the time when you awaken during the night.
9. Have a special "worry time" before you go to sleep.
10. Have enough daylight during the day – natural light helps with sleep/night cycles.
11. Try relaxation or other special ways of helping you sleep. Your library may loan relaxation tapes.
12. Try not to worry about not sleeping.

Sources: Fiatarone-Singh, 2000; Combined Pensioners & Superannuants Association of NSW, 2000.

# bus with safety



## Planning

1. Have your money ready.
2. Be early so that you are first in the queue.
3. Travel in non-peak times (10 - 2pm) when there are fewer crowds.
4. Bus routes using accessible buses are marked with an "A" on the government bus timetables so you can plan ahead. These allow easy access on and off the bus if you need it and are not just for wheelchair access. Timetables and other information are available on 131500 or on the web at [www.131500.com.au](http://www.131500.com.au)
5. Take a backpack in case you see little things to buy.
6. Go to the bigger shops with a friend on the council bus trip.

## On the bus

1. Ask the driver not to take off until you're seated.
2. Take the first seat – up front if possible.
3. Keep a hand free to hold on.
4. Don't get out of your seat or change seats when the bus is moving.

## Getting off the bus

1. Always ask the bus driver to pull up as close to the gutter as possible. Tell him you have a problem getting out even if you don't.
2. When you get off the bus pause, and go in the direction the bus is travelling.
3. If you have trouble with your knees – go down the bus steps sideways, or even backwards. It might help.
4. There is often a sign nearby the bus stop. Use it to help you up the gutter.
5. Thank the driver when he is helpful.



# train travel safety

## Planning

1. Be early so you don't have to rush.
2. Ask the ticket seller which platform to go to.
3. Ring ahead (Infoline 131500) to find out about the station you are leaving from or travelling to. You can find out if it has a lift, if the platform is curved or not (it might have a gap if it is curved), if steps have a handrail, etc. Can request brochure to be mailed.
4. If you use a stick be sure and take it when travelling by train.
5. Travel in non-peak times (10-2 p.m.) when there are less crowds.
6. Can ring before you travel and ask for extra help at your destination if have a disability. (Infoline 131500 will put you through to the station.)

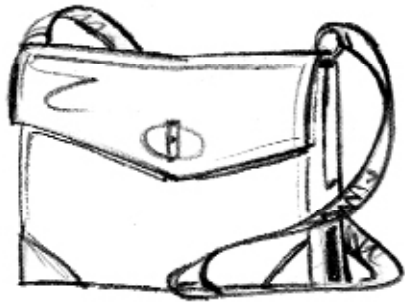
## Getting on and off the train

1. Ask the guard (or someone on the station or train) to help you with your luggage.
2. Take your time getting on. The train guard will not move the train while you are getting on or off.
3. Get on near the guard's carriage. It is usually in the middle of the platform and has a blue light above the door.
4. If you can, sit in the first seating area to avoid the stairs.
5. If you have trouble with your knees try getting off sideways, holding the rail.

## Local knowledge

1. \_\_\_\_\_ station has (tick if yes):
  - Stairs with a handrail
  - Hearing loop (that is microphone and amplifier at the ticket office)
  - Taxi and buses nearby
  - Lift
  - Escalator
  - Curved platform
2. Easy access stations (15 so far, 33 are planned)– include Circular Quay, Parramatta, Strathfield, Westmead.
3. Country Link. Four free tickets per year for pensioners (seniors half price) but tickets must be booked ahead. Your luggage can be booked in, in advance so that you don't have to handle it yourself.

# taking care against bag snatchers



- Carry your bag close to your side. Keeping your purse close to your body and your arm over it makes it a little harder for someone to grab the-purse.
- Always keep the bag zipped up.
- Walk closer to the wall with bag towards the wall.
- Do not leave your bag unattended.
- Do not put wallet, purse or keys in your backpack.
- Do not carry lots of cash.
- What is in the bag? If it is important then photocopy it (as you would if going overseas).
- Have your keys ready before you get to the car or-front door.
- Do not mark keys with your address.
- Tie your key on elastic and pin under your blouse or shirt so that it is not easy to reach. Then if your bag is stolen you won't lose your keys.
- Investigate local self-defence courses for older people.



# strength and balance exercises to prevent falls

## **Stepping On Participant manual**

These exercises have been condensed from, and are used with permission of:

New Zealand Falls Prevention Research Group, *Exercise programme to prevent falls in older people: A home based individually tailored strength and balance retraining programme*, April, <http://www.acc.co.nz> and search for otago exercise programme.

## Welcome to the program!

These exercises have been selected to help you reduce the chance of falls. When you do these exercises you can improve:

- Balance
- Muscle strength

**You need to do these exercises 3 times each week. You can divide the exercises up. They do not all have to be done at the same time. Between each set of exercises take 3 deep breaths.** You may feel a bit stiff at first. This is quite normal. It is because you are using muscles that are not used to working in this way. It is important you keep exercising. The stiffness will leave as your body becomes more used to the exercises.

## Safety

Never exercise holding onto an object which may move, such as a chair. Use something stable like a bench or solid table.

CONTACT YOUR DOCTOR IF, WHILE EXERCISING, YOU EXPERIENCE:

- Dizziness
- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath (you are unable to speak because you are short of breath)

If you have any questions please ask next week at the program or telephone me at any time.



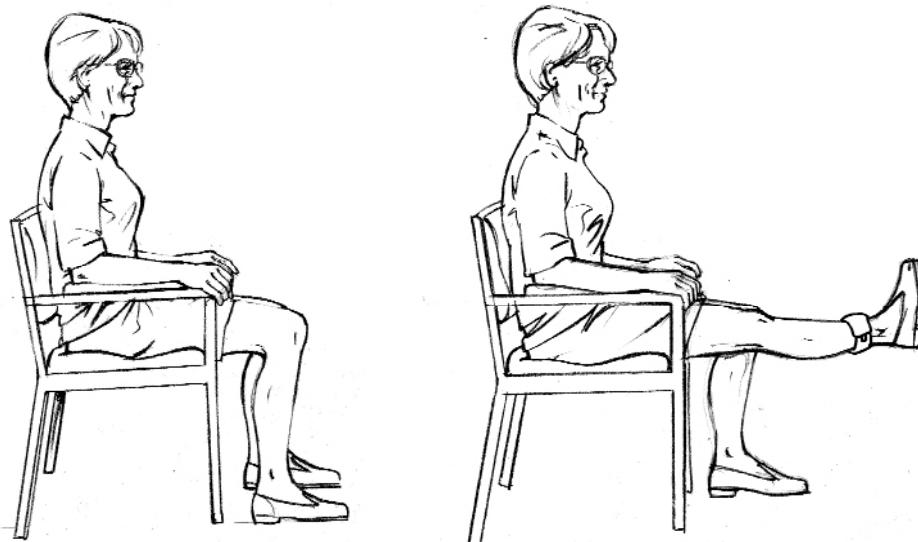
## Getting stronger by using weights

Strengthening your muscles is essential for keeping healthy bones and muscles that are needed for walking and for being independent in your daily activities.

You should aim to do the strengthening exercises 3 times a week with a rest day in between.

Lift the weight slowly through the entire range of movement. Never hold your breath while lifting. You should inhale before lifting, exhale while lifting and inhale again while lowering the weight.

## Front knee strengthening exercise

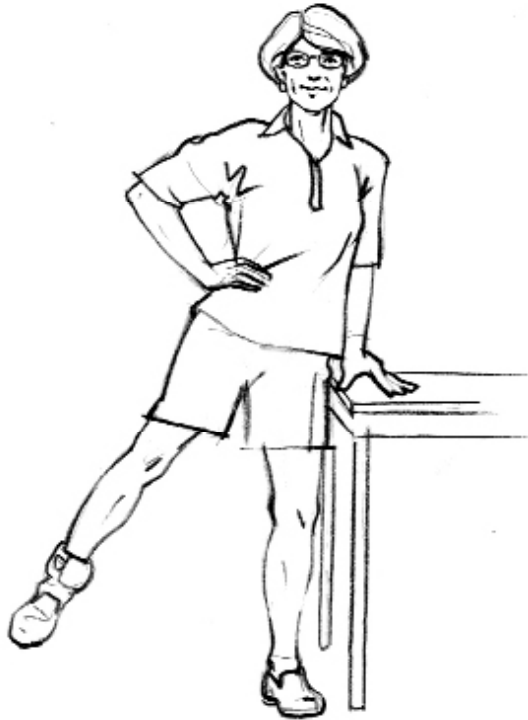


You could do this exercise while you are watching TV

- Strap the weight onto your ankle
- Sit on a chair with your back well supported
- Straighten the right leg
- Hold for five seconds
- Lower the leg
- Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times for the right leg
- Strap the weight onto your left ankle
- Hold for five seconds
- Repeat this exercise \_\_\_\_\_ times.



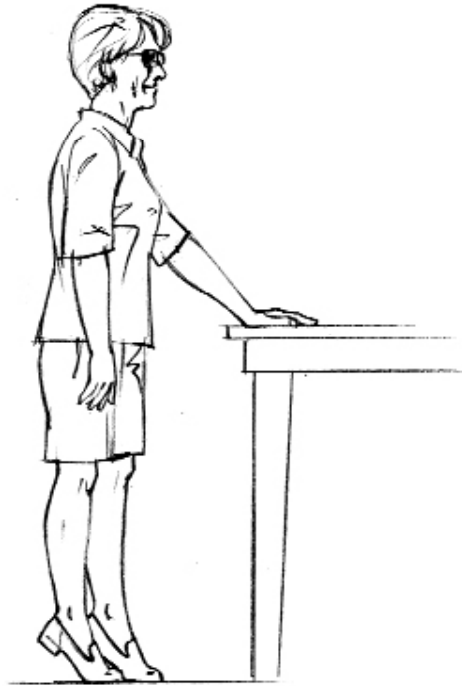
## Side hip strengthening exercise



Strap the weight onto your right ankle

- Stand up tall with your left side toward the bench
- Hold on with your left hand
- Keep the right leg straight and the foot straight forward
- Lift the right leg out to the side and return
- Repeat \_\_\_\_\_ times for the right leg
- Strap the weight onto your left ankle
- Turn around
- Repeat this exercise \_\_\_\_\_ times for the left leg

## Calf raises



Stand up tall facing the bench

- Hold on
- The feet are shoulder-width apart
- Come up onto your toes
- Lower the heels to the ground
- Repeat this exercise \_\_\_\_\_ times



## Calf raises upgrade



Stand up tall and look ahead

- The feet are shoulder-width apart
- Come up onto your toes
- Lower the heels to the ground
- Repeat this exercise \_\_\_\_\_ times

## Improving Balance to prevent falls



Balance is important for everyday activities. The following quick balance exercises could be done every day or whenever you think about them.

You can improve your balance and maintain the gain



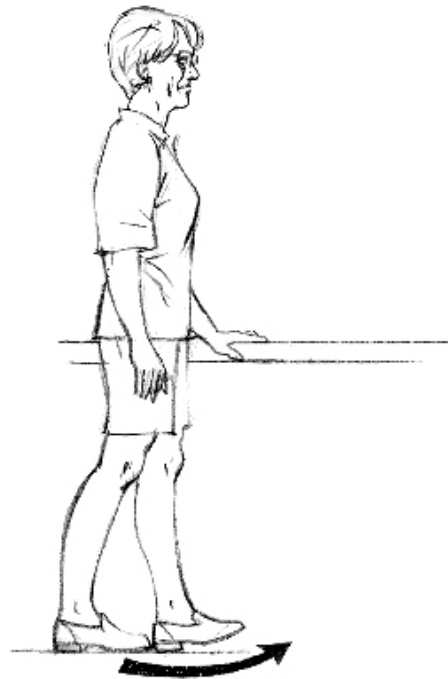
## Sideways walking



Stand up tall and place your hands on your hips

- Take 10 steps to the right
- Take 10 steps to the left
- Repeat

## Heel-toe standing



Stand up tall beside the bench

- Hold onto the bench and look ahead
- Place one foot directly in front of the other foot so the feet form a straight line
- Hold this position for 10 seconds
- Change position and place the foot behind directly in front
- Hold this position for 10 seconds



## Heel-toe upgrade



- Stand up tall beside the bench
- Place one foot directly in front of the other foot so the feet form a straight line
- Hold this position for 10 seconds
- Change position and place the foot behind directly in front
- Hold this position for 10 seconds

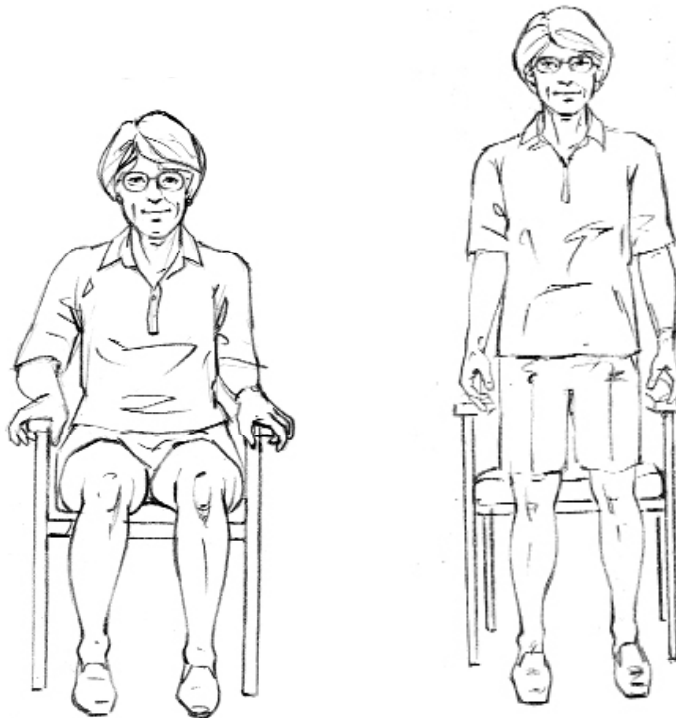
## Sit-to stand



- You could do this exercise while you watch TV
- Sit on a chair which is not too low
- Place the feet behind your knees
- Lean forwards over your knees
- Push off with both hands and stand up **slowly**
- Hold for five seconds
- Repeat this exercise \_\_\_\_\_ times



## Sitto stand upgrade



- You could do this exercise while you watch TV
- Sit on a chair which is not too low
- Place the feet behind your knees
- Lean forwards over your knees
- Stand up **slowly** without using your hands
- Hold for five seconds
- Repeat this exercise \_\_\_\_\_ times

# Walking

Walking is an excellent way to improve your general fitness.

Try going for a walk on the days between your strengthening exercises.

Try to increase the distance you walk and the time you spend walking.

## Tips for walking

- Wear safe and comfortable shoes and clothing.
- Start with a warm-up. March on the spot for two minutes.

## When you walk

- The shoulders are relaxed and the arms gently swing.
- Look at least several paces ahead, not down.
- With each step the heel lands first then you push off on the toes.
- Finish with a warm-down. March on the spot for two minutes.



## Remember

- Walking is good for you and we recommend walking regularly. But walking alone will not increase or maintain your muscle strength or balance.
- You need to have good muscle strength and balance to help prevent falls.
- When you are ready you can:
  1. increase the number of times you do each exercise, or
  2. increase the weight.
- You need to keep doing the strength exercises at least three times a week and the balance exercises as often as you can.
- You can do these exercises in one go or "snack" on them at different times of the day. Do what works for you.

