

Surrey Downs

Falls Prevention Guide

This leaflet is for people who have had a fall, are fearful of falling or for anyone who would like some helpful falls prevention advice.

Falls and fall related injuries can lead to serious problems. The effects of a fall could lead to distress, pain, injury, loss of confidence and independence. Many falls are preventable. It is important for you to know what to do to reduce your risk of falling.

Ways to help prevent a fall



Vision

Poor vision can increase your risk of falling. If you are over 60, you are entitled to a free annual eye test. Contact your local optician to book an appointment.



Hearing

Poor hearing can affect balance. You may benefit from a hearing test. The test is often free. Ask your GP practice, optician or larger pharmacy for information.



Medication reviews

Some medication can have side effects that may make you feel unsteady. If you are taking four or more medications, your risk of falling may be increased. Contact your GP practice who will be able to advise you how to arrange a medication review.



Keep warm

Heat your home to at least 18°C (65°F) during the winter months. Wear plenty of layers when going out in cold weather. If you are aged 65 or over you are eligible for the Winter Fuel Payment.

To apply, call:

 0800 731 01 60



Blood pressure

Feeling dizzy or lightheaded when you stand up may be a sign that you have low blood pressure. Contact your GP practice if you have any concerns.



Mobility aids

Make sure walking sticks and frames are the correct height. Check and replace the rubber ends when they are worn out as they provide grip. Replacement rubber ends can be bought from large pharmacies or mobility shops.



Footwear and slippers

Make sure your shoes and slippers fit properly. Good footwear should have support around the heel and over the top of your foot. Lace-ups, velcro straps or T-bar straps are preferable to help stability.



Keep active

Regular exercise can help improve muscle strength, joint flexibility, balance and co-ordination. These can all help with everyday activities, including walking, bending down to put on shoes and getting in and out of a chair.



Keep hydrated

Dry skin and mouth, dizziness, constipation, dark coloured, concentrated urine, tiredness and headaches can all be early signs of dehydration. Drink at least 6 to 8 cups of fluid a day to stay hydrated, e.g. water, squash, fruit juice and tea. Eat foods with high water content such as melon, pineapple rings, jellies, yoghurt, ice lollies and soups.



Alcohol

Alcohol can make you dehydrated. It can also lead to a loss of co-ordination. If you are taking medicines, be aware that alcohol could have an effect on your balance. Avoiding alcohol, or reducing the amount you drink can reduce your risk of having a fall.



Ways to help prevent a fall



Home hazards and falls

Over half of falls occur in the home. Think about your home environment. Some changes can be made to help minimise the risk of trips and falls:

- Leave lights on in your hallway at night for visits to the bathroom and when you are moving around your home
- Consider where you may need handrails to be installed inside and outside your house – in the bathroom and by the front door are typical places to consider
- Use non-slip mats and rugs, check for curling corners
- Make sure there are no loose wires that could cause you to trip. If there are any, tape them down
- Clear up spilled food or drink straight away

Your local council's Housing Adaptation /Handyperson service may be able to assist you with work to ensure that your property is safe and adequately equipped to meet your needs. For more information call:

- 📞 Mole Valley residents 0330 124 3758
- 📞 East Elmbridge residents 01372 474 645
- 📞 Epsom residents 01372 732 000
- 📞 Banstead residents 0330 124 3758



Calcium and Vitamin D are important for your bones

You can ensure your bones stay healthy and strong by:

- starting the day with cereal and milk.
- considering tinned sardines or pilchards, as well as tuna.
- eating plenty of vegetables and chopped nuts in meals.
- adding yoghurt to fruit as a dessert, also enjoy custard and milk puddings.
- checking that non-dairy substitutes have added calcium.
- getting some sun – being outside increases your Vitamin D intake, as well as boosting your mood.
- doing about 20 minutes gentle outdoor exercise every day.
- avoiding smoking as this can cause osteoporosis and low bone density.

Adults should consider taking an over the counter daily supplement of 10 micrograms of vitamin D, especially during the autumn and winter. At risk groups, people over the age of 65 and people with darker skin who are not exposed to much sun should consider taking the supplement all year round.

If you are unable to meet your daily required intake of calcium from food, then a calcium supplement may be of use. Ask your GP or community pharmacist for advice.



Services for Surrey Downs residents

Each of the Borough and District Councils provides a wide range of community services, such as Wellbeing Centres, a home from hospital advice service, community transport and dementia services. To learn more about the support that is available, please contact your Borough or District Council.



Community Meals Service

Eating regular healthy meals is important for maintaining your health. You can order meals, delivered to your home hot and ready to eat, from the services below. For more information, please contact your local Borough Council

-  Mole Valley residents
01372 474 552
(covers Bookham,
Fetcham and Leatherhead)
-  Dorking & Banstead residents
Contact Wiltshire Farm Foods
08000 773 100
(these meals are frozen oven-ready)
-  East Elmbridge residents
01372 474 552
(covers Molesey East and West, Esher,
Claygate, Long Ditton, Thames Ditton,
Weston Green, Cobham and Claygate)
-  Epsom and Ashtead residents
01372 732 000



Flu vaccinations


Get your seasonal flu jab. If you are aged 65 and over or if you have a long term health condition, you can have a flu jab, free of charge. Contact your GP practice or pharmacy to book an appointment.




Basic foot care services

You can access basic foot care advice and services such as toenail cutting.

 Mole Valley residents
Fairfield Social Centre - 01372 376 058
Dorking Christian Centre - 01306 886 830

 East Elmbridge residents
Claygate 01372 463 476
Molesey 0208 979 5773
Thames Ditton 0208 398 5921

 Epsom residents
Epsom Foot Clinic - 01372 747 077

 Banstead residents
Feet for Most Foot Clinic - 01737 352 156

Coping with a fall



If you are worried about falling you may consider having a mobile, cordless phone or care alarm that you can carry with you in your pocket. If you do fall find something to keep you warm and comfortable like a tablecloth or blanket. Call 999 for help.



If you can get up, and don't have pain, roll onto your side. Using your arms, push yourself onto your hands and knees. Crawl or bottom shuffle to a sturdy piece of furniture. Put your hands onto the piece of furniture and bend your stronger leg up. Use your arms to rise into standing position. Turn yourself gently, sit and rest.

Let your health care professional know you've had a fall. A lot of older people think a fall is part of ageing. It's not! There may be a reason for falling and they could help.



Community Alarm

A pendant alarm is ideal if you don't feel steady on your feet or if you live on your own. It will mean that you won't be lying on the floor for long periods if you have a fall. Whether at home or out and about, traditional lifeline alarms with a pendant and now GPS location tracking devices ensure that help will be on its way wherever you fall. Simply press the button in an emergency and it will be received in the Alarm Receiving Centre 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. For more details please call:

-  Mole Valley residents 01372 204500
-  East Elmbridge residents 01372 474560
(Molesey East and West, Esher, Claygate, Long Ditton, Thames Ditton, Weston Green, Cobham and Claygate)
-  Epsom residents 01372 732000
-  Banstead residents 01372 204500

Regaining confidence after a fall

Fear of falling over is very common after experiencing a fall. It can create worry and lead people to stop doing their normal activities and stay indoors.

If you restrict your activities it can lead to a loss of muscle, confidence and feelings of failure.

Stay active and make use of friends, family and other support, for example, a walking frame, that you have available.

Think about your progress and the times you have not fallen.



Laughter and new friends

Social interaction is important and can help if you are feeling lonely or isolated.

Different ways to meet people in your community include:

- Wellbeing Centres/Centres for the Community are provided by each of your local councils. Centres provide services, activities and facilities.
- Exercise classes
- Social Prescribing – ask your GP practice about this

Do you need extra support?



Information and advice

You can find out more about what support is available in your area at your local library, the council offices, your local Wellbeing Centre or by visiting the Surrey Information Point website at:

 www.surreyinformationpoint.org.uk

This outlines details about services provided by local charities, community groups and activity groups.

If you would prefer to speak to someone please call the Adult Social Care Information and Advice Line:


 0300 200 1500 or text 07527 182 861



Surrey Downs Falls Service

There is a Surrey Downs Falls Service available to people who have suffered a fall, or who are at risk of injury through a fall. The service, which is provided through Surrey Downs Health and Care Partnership (a joint NHS / Social Care partnership), includes assessment, advice and exercise to help you regain your health and confidence. If you feel that you would benefit from this service please contact a health professional via your GP practice so they can refer you. It is also possible to self-refer. For all referrals, please contact:

 CSH.Referrals@nhs.net

 0208 394 3863 (8am – 6pm Monday to Friday).

If you need this information in another language or format please contact us using the details below.

Jeśli potrzebujesz tych informacji w innym języku lub formacie, skontaktuj się z nami, korzystając z poniższych danych.

如果您需要该信息的其他语言或格式版本，请使用下面的详细信息与我们联系。

Si necesita esta información en otro idioma o formato, contáctenos usando los detalles a continuación.

Se precisar desta informação noutro idioma ou formato, por favor entre em contato conosco através dos dados em baixo.

Si vous avez besoin de ces informations dans une autre langue ou dans un autre format, veuillez nous contacter en utilisant les coordonnées ci-dessous.

This document can be downloaded or printed via the NHS Surrey Downs CCG website

 www.surreydownsccg.nhs.uk

 01372 201 510

 sdccg.urgentcare.integration@nhs.net

Produced by

