

Newcastle, Stoke and Staffordshire Moorlands

FALLS AWARENESS WEEK 2016

Steady as we go

Sep 26th
- Oct 2nd



Falls Awareness Week shines a **spotlight** on the main reasons why people fall and how you can **reduce the risks of falling.**



Age is one of the key reasons people fall and older people are most likely to suffer serious injury from a fall. Around one in three people over 65 living at home will have at least one fall a year, and about half of these will have frequent falls.

The injuries from falling can be very serious, such as hip fractures and even death, and the fear of falling can lead to loss of confidence, loss of independence and increased isolation.

According to the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, the bill for falls in England is around £6m a day or £2.3bn per year. **For example:**

- ▲ Each visit to A&E costs £100
- ▲ Ambulance call-outs cost £165
- ▲ Average hip fracture costs are around £5,300.

Last year in Stoke and North Staffordshire there were over 2000 hospital admissions for falls-related injuries. Total annual NHS costs resulting from falls in our area are estimated to be in the region of £20m and rising.

Top Tips for preventing falls in the home

- ▲ Mop up spillages straightaway
- ▲ Remove clutter, trailing wires and frayed carpet
- ▲ Use non-slip mats and rugs
- ▲ Use high-wattage light bulbs in lamps and torches, so you can see clearly
- ▲ Organise your home so that climbing, stretching and bending are kept to a minimum, and to avoid bumping into things
- ▲ Get help to do things that you're unable to do safely on your own
- ▲ Don't walk on slippery floors in socks or tights
- ▲ Don't wear loose-fitting, trailing clothes that might trip you up
- ▲ Wear well-fitting shoes that are in good condition and support the ankle
- ▲ Take care of your feet by trimming your toenails regularly and see your GP or chiropodist about any foot problems.
- ▲ Have regular reviews of your medication with your GP to make sure they are not likely to cause you to fall.

What are the causes of falls?

There are many things that can make us more likely to fall including:

- ▲ Deteriorating eye-sight, balance or poor hearing can all contribute.
- ▲ Loss of muscle strength.
- ▲ Having dementia may increase the risk of falls.
- ▲ Sometimes, the medications we take can make us unsteady, or drinking excess alcohol.
- ▲ Hazards in the home such as small items of furniture, rugs, magazines on the floor, or worn slippers.
- ▲ If you've had a fall, the fear of falling again might mean you are not confident to do as much as you used to, which can lead to loss of physical fitness.
- ▲ In turn, this can lead to more falls.

Steady as we go Things we can do to stay steady on our feet:

- ▲ Go to your GP if you have fallen or are worried about falling and always talk to them if your medications are making you feel dizzy.
- ▲ Exercise to help keep muscles strong and improve your balance.
- ▲ Eat a balanced diet to reduce your risk of falling.
- ▲ Get your eyes and hearing checked and look after your feet.
- ▲ Make your home safer by keeping it well-lit and clutter-free.
- ▲ Get a home hazard assessment and find out about adaptations and aids.
- ▲ Watch out for tripping hazards while out and about.
- ▲ Give your eyes time to adjust to changing light conditions when moving from inside to outdoors.



Prevention is better than cure Who can help, what they do and how to contact them.

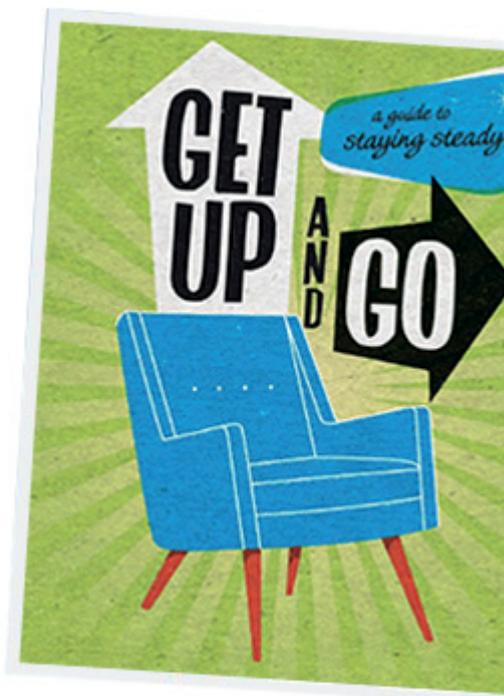
There are lots of local organisations that can help you avoid the risks of falling or support you after a fall.

The Staffordshire Cares website contains a host of useful information.

Go to: www.staffordshirecares.info/Living-Independently/safety-in-the-home/falls.aspx

This Falls Awareness leaflet is published by a partnership of local organisations working together to help prevent falls:

- ▲ Age UK North Staffordshire
- ▲ Newcastle Borough Council
- ▲ North Staffordshire and Stoke Clinical Commissioning Groups
- ▲ North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust
- ▲ Revival Home Improvement Agency
- ▲ Staffordshire County Council
- ▲ Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Partnership NHS Trust
- ▲ Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service
- ▲ Stoke City Council
- ▲ University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust
- ▲ West Midlands Ambulance Service.



To speak to an advisor you can call:

Newcastle & Staffordshire Moorlands:
0300 111 8010

Monday to Thursday: 8am to 8pm
Friday: 8am to 6pm, Saturday: 9am to 5pm
Sunday: Closed

Stoke-on-Trent:
0800 561 0015

Monday to Friday: 8am to 8pm
Saturday: 9am - 1pm
Sunday: Closed