Age Friendly Calderdale

Falls Prevention Awareness Pack

Information, tips and local support to help you stay steady, strong and independent









Produced by the Calderdale Falls Prevention Network

Calderdale VISION 34 | Calderdale Forum 50+ | Calderdale & Kirklees ageUK

1 INTRODUCTION

Falls: why this pack matters

Most falls don't cause serious injury, but **there's always a risk of broken bones or other complications**. A fall can also knock your confidence and independence, and affect family and carers too.

The good news is that **many falls can be prevented**, and support is available if you've had a fall or fear falling. This pack shows you how.

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What to do if you have a fall

1. **Stay calm.** Check for pain or injury before you try to get up.
2. **Can't get up?** Use your phone or personal alarm, or bang on the wall or floor to get attention.
3. **Keep warm.** Cover yourself with anything you can reach.
4. **Keep moving.** Roll from side to side or gently move your arms and legs.
5. **Unhurt?** Follow the steps on the next pages to get up safely.

Plan ahead

- Keep a **phone on you** (pocket or belt), with family and neighbours' numbers saved.
- Think about a **pendant or community alarm**.
- Keep **cushions, blankets and water** at floor level around the house, where they won't cause a trip.

Hurt or can't get up?

Call **999** or press your personal alarm.



Getting up from a fall

If you should fall, lie still for a minute, stay calm and check for injuries. If you are unhurt and think you can get up, follow the steps opposite (rest between each one if you need to). If you know you can't get up, or feel pain in your hips or back if you move, see overleaf for ways to summon help



Saga Learn how to fall-proof your home at saga.co.uk/falls

1 

Roll on to your side, then push up on to your elbows.

2 

Use your arms to push yourself on to your hands and knees.

3 

Crawl to a very stable piece of furniture (a sturdy chair or bed) and hold on to it for support.

Hot tip:

If you can't get on to all fours, bottom-shuffle or roll to a low surface like the bottom stair or sofa. Sit with your back to it, put your arms behind you on to the surface and push up with your hands and feet, lifting your bottom onto the surface. If using the stairs, go up to the next step before standing up.

"I slipped in the kitchen and couldn't get up. Afterwards, my daughter suggested I practised while she was there to help. I felt silly crawling around the house, but now I feel much more confident about getting up on my own."

4 

Slide or raise the foot of your stronger leg forwards so it's flat on the floor.

5 

Lean forwards and push up using your arms and front leg, slowly rising to standing position.

6 

Turn around and sit down. Sit for a minute or two to rest.

Six things you can do to prevent a fall



Speak up – even after a "near miss"

Tell your GP about any fall, even without injury. **Many causes of falls can be treated.**



Have your medication reviewed

Some medicines affect balance or make you feel weak. **Ask your GP for a medicine review.**



Keep active

Strength and balance exercise is **one of the best things you can do**. Walking, gardening and stairs all count. See page 8.



Check your eyes, ears and feet

Regular checks **pick up problems early**. See page 7.



Make your home safer

Check regularly for trip hazards in your home. See page 12.



Self-refer for support

Gateway's Falls Prevention Service can assess your risk and help you make a plan. **Call 01422 393000.**

Small changes add up.

Eyes, ears and feet

Free NHS eye tests

At high-street opticians if you're **60 or over**, or have certain medical needs.

Find an NHS sight test near you

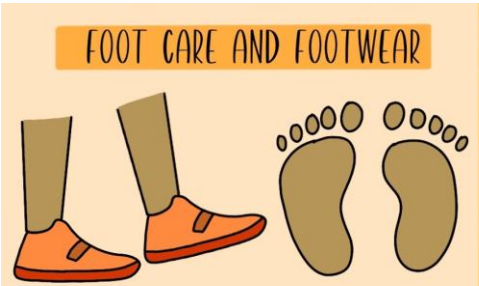
Hearing checks

Noticed hearing loss or ear problems? **See your GP**, who can refer you for a hearing test and hearing aids.

Or try the free RNID online hearing check.



- Regular vision & hearing checks can help prevent falls
- If you have them, remember to wear your prescribed hearing aids or glasses
- Ensure glasses are clean and hearing aid batteries are charged



- Ensure footwear fits properly
- Make sure footwear has a cushioned, light, flexible rubber sole & good grip
- Try to avoid backless footwear and heel height above 1 inch
- Take care of your feet, seek support for conditions e.g, bunions

Staying active

Regular activity is **one of the best ways to prevent falls**. It builds strength and balance, and helps rebuild confidence after a fall.

Not exercised for a while, or have a health condition? **Speak to your GP first.**

Start with the **six exercises opposite** from Saga and the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy.



Six exercises for strength and balance

Try them **daily, or at least twice a week**. Use a sturdy chair or kitchen worktop for support.

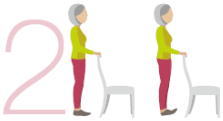
Use a sturdy chair and wear supportive shoes. A little soreness the next day is normal.

Chest pain, dizziness or severe breathlessness? STOP and call your GP or 111.



Heel raises

Hold a sturdy chair or worktop. Rise up onto your toes, hold for 3 seconds, then lower slowly. Repeat 10 times.



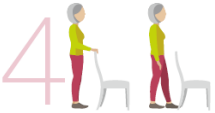
Toe raises

Hold the same support. Lift your toes so your weight is on your heels – keep your bottom in. Hold for 3 seconds, lower slowly. Repeat 10 times.



Sit to stand

Sit near the front of a chair, feet slightly back. Lean forward and stand up (use your hands if needed). Slowly sit back down. Repeat 10 times.



Heel-toe stand

Hold your support. Put one foot directly in front of the other. Look ahead, let go and balance for 10 seconds. Swap feet and repeat.



Heel-toe walking

Hold a support such as a worktop. Look ahead and take 10 steps, placing one foot directly in front of the other. Turn around and walk back.



One-leg stand

Hold your support with one hand. Balance on one leg, knee soft and back straight, for 10 seconds. Repeat on the other leg.

CUT OUT AND KEEP

My falls prevention plan

Tick off each step as you go.

- [ ] Tell my GP about any fall or “near miss” p6
- [ ] Ask for a medicine review p6
- [ ] Book an eye test and hearing check p7
- [ ] Do my six exercises p9
- [ ] Check my home for hazards p13
- [ ] Think about how much I drink p17
- [ ] Self-refer to Gateway if I’ve fallen or fear falling p21

My important numbers

Emergency	**999**
NHS non-emergency	**111**
Gateway (self-referral)	**01422 393000**
My GP surgery	
My pharmacy	
Family member or friend	
Neighbour	
Personal alarm provider	

Support to be active in Calderdale

Active Calderdale
Supporting you to be active guide
activecalderdale@calderdale.gov.uk

Ageing Well sessions at sports centres
Todmorden Sports Centre **01706 839090**
Sowerby Bridge Pool and Fitness Centre **01422 288078**

Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees — **01422 252 040**
Activity classes across Calderdale

Better Living Service — **01422 230230**
Help to get active. Steps 2 Health for long-term conditions (Brighouse and Sowerby Bridge)

Chance to Dance — **01422 417300**
Fun, inclusive dance – Hebden Bridge Town Hall

imtforever — **07510 187211**
Meet, Move & Mingle – strength, mobility and balance, various venues

Plus Health Company — **07824 380358**
Physio-led 'Step up and Wobble' balance classes, Broad Street Plaza, Halifax

Tai Chi Tigers — **07810 094 395**
Tai chi for flexibility and balance, various venues

Calderdale Forum 50 Plus
The In-Touch Directory of local health and fitness groups

Home safety

Your home can be **one of the biggest falls risks**. These habits cut your risk:

- Clear clutter and use non-slip mats and rugs
- Keep rooms and stairs well lit
- Wear well-fitting shoes – not socks or tights on slippery floors
- Keep everyday items within easy reach – no climbing or stretching
- Heat your home to at least 18°C – cold homes increase falls risk



Room by room check

Use **RoSPA's check sheet opposite** to spot hazards in each room.

More tips: [RoSPA Falls Prevention Hub]

Preventing falls at home

ROSPA accidents don't have to happen

Room by room check sheet

At the front and back door

- ☐ Paths, steps and patios are even and well maintained
- ☐ Handrail is in place next to steps
- ☐ Walking route is well drained and free of pots, fallen leaves etc.
- ☐ Door mat is secure and won't slip

On the stairs and landing

- ☐ Carpet is in good condition and is not heavily patterned
- ☐ Free of clutter like shoes or papers
- ☐ Handrails on both sides of the stairs
- ☐ Handrails fitted securely along the full length of the stairs
- ☐ No loose, broken or wobbly steps
- ☐ Good lighting can be switched on from the top or bottom of the stairs.

In the bathroom

- ☐ Non-slip mats are in place for the bath or shower
- ☐ Grab rails are securely fitted beside the bath, toilet and shower
- ☐ A bathmat is used to minimise wet floors after a bath or shower.

In the kitchen

- ☐ Flooring is slip-resistant and in good condition
- ☐ Everyday use items are stored within easy reach around waist height
- ☐ A sturdy stool with a handle is available for reaching higher items
- ☐ Spills are cleared up and wet patches are investigated to fix the cause of leaks.

In the hallway and living room

- ☐ Carpets are in good condition
- ☐ Rugs are secured and won't slip
- ☐ Walking routes are clear and free from furniture or other obstacles
- ☐ Cables and wires are kept tidy and away from walkways
- ☐ Floor is free from clutter such as magazines, shoes and bags.

In the bedroom

- ☐ Floor is free of clutter, particularly around the bed
- ☐ A light is available with easy reach from the bed
- ☐ Slippers fit well and are in good condition.

Comments:

Property type: _____

Step-free access: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Number of bedrooms: _____

Date: _____ **Name:** _____

Home safety support in Calderdale

Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees Handyperson Service	**01422 252040**
Healthy Homes Service Energy efficiency and warm homes	**01422 288002**
Accessible Homes Agency Adapting or improving homes	**01422 288002**
Green Doctor Free advice to save energy and cut bills	**Register online**
Housing Options in Calderdale	**01422 392460**
West Yorkshire Fire Service Safe and Well Visits	**0800 587 4536**



- Be careful of trip hazards e.g. trailing wires, rugs, uneven or slippery floors and pets
- At night, put a light on when going to the toilet
- Ensure walking sticks and other aids are right for you and in good condition

Eating, drinking and ageing well

After 65 you need **slightly more protein, calcium, folate and vitamin B12**. Your needs for carbohydrate, sugar, fibre, fat and salt stay about the same.



Enjoy your food

Choosing, cooking and sharing meals helps you eat well. Food linked to your culture or faith is there to be celebrated.

Keep your weight steady

A steady weight is usually best as you get older. Underweight? Ask for support. Trying to lose weight? Keep eating well and stay active to protect your muscles.

Take vitamin D

Vitamin D keeps bones and muscles strong and helps **prevent falls and fractures**. Take a **10 microgram (400 IU)** supplement each day, especially in winter. D3 is best; D2 suits a vegan diet.

Stay active

Moving more, alongside a nutrient-rich diet, keeps your muscles, bones and joints strong. See page 8.

Based on the British Dietetic Association's Eating, drinking and ageing well fact sheet.

What to eat and drink

Protein at every meal

90g cooked meat · 140g fish · 2 eggs · 150g beans or lentils · 30g nuts. Fish twice a week, one oily. Limit processed meat.

Milk and dairy 3 a day

200ml milk · 30g cheese · 125g yoghurt, or calcium-fortified alternatives. Keeps bones strong.

Fruit and veg 5 or more a day

80g fresh, frozen or canned · 30g dried. Leafy greens like kale and spinach give you folate.

Starchy foods at every meal

190g cooked pasta or rice · 80g bread · 30g cereal · 150g potato. Choose wholegrain for fibre.

Vitamin B12 regularly

Meat, fish, eggs, dairy, fortified cereals or yeast extract – helps your energy levels.

Fats small amounts

Swap butter or ghee for vegetable, rapeseed or olive oil. Nuts and seeds are good choices.

Drink enough – even if you don't feel thirsty

Women at least 1,600ml (3 pints) · **Men at least 2,000ml (3½ pints)**

All drinks count – water, tea, coffee and milk are best. Sip little and often. Not drinking enough can cause dizziness and falls.

Limit: sugary snacks and drinks, salt (try herbs, spices and lemon), and alcohol – see page 17.

Alcohol and falls

Alcohol affects your balance more as you get older. **Even small amounts can raise your risk of a fall.**

Balance: slower reactions and poorer coordination

Medicines: alcohol can react with sleeping tablets, some painkillers and blood pressure tablets, causing drowsiness or dizziness

Night-time trips: more trips to the toilet, often in the dark

Bones and muscles: heavy drinking weakens them, so a fall is more likely to cause a break

Small changes that help

- Keep to **14 units a week or less**, spread over 3 or more days
- **Ask your pharmacist** if alcohol is safe with your medicines
- Eat first, and **alternate with water** or lower-strength drinks
- After a drink, **take care on stairs** and leave a light on at night



- Some medications make you dizzy or drowsy which increases the risk of falls
- Your medication review should be done by your GP every 12 months
- Too much alcohol can lead to falls, weaker bones & affect your balance
- Your local pharmacist can give further advice on medications and falls

Support with alcohol in Calderdale

What is 14 units?

Pint of 4% beer	175ml glass of 13% wine	25ml single 40% spirit
2.3 units	**2.3 units**	**1 unit**

Worried about your drinking, or someone else's? **Free, confidential help is available.**

Calderdale Recovery Steps (Waythrough)

Free support for adults and their families, including one-to-one help, groups and community detox. You can refer yourself.

01422 415550 Refer online

The Basement Recovery Project

Halifax charity offering recovery programmes and peer support. 10 Carlton Street, Halifax.

01422 383063

Your GP, pharmacist or Ageing Well Team

Can talk about your drinking and medicines, and refer you for support.

National helplines (free)

Drinkline 0300 123 1110
Alcoholics Anonymous 0800 9177 650
Al-Anon (family and friends) 0800 0086 811

Ageing Well Service

The **Ageing Well Team** supports Calderdale's **40,000+ people aged over 65** to age well at home. They look at your physical, mental and social wellbeing, and focus on what matters to you.

The team includes a Specialist Health Care Practitioner, Social Prescribing Link Workers, Care Co-ordinators and the Clinical Pharmacy Team, working with GPs, hospitals, the council and voluntary groups.



They aim to:

- Reduce GP visits and appointments
- Reduce hospital admissions and length of stay
- Reduce falls
- Improve medication management
- Reduce loneliness
- Increase health confidence
- Improve wellbeing

Think: Eat – Move – Sleep – Connect

The team's four themes for ageing well – see the tips opposite. **Ask your GP practice about an Ageing Well assessment.**

Eat, move, sleep, connect

Eat

- 5 portions of fruit and veg a day
- Base meals on starchy foods; choose wholegrain
- Include dairy and protein – fish twice a week, one oily
- Drink 6–8 glasses of fluid a day
- Cut down on fatty, salty and sugary foods
- Weight loss isn't just part of ageing – **ask for advice**

Move

- Builds muscle and bone, and improves **balance**, mood, sleep and energy
- Aim for **150 minutes** a week, plus strength twice and balance once a week
- Start small – **every step counts**
- The team can make you a personal plan

Sleep

- Aim for around **8 hours** – poor sleep increases falls risk
- Be active in the day
- Keep phones and TVs out of the bedroom
- Avoid late caffeine and alcohol; keep a bedtime routine

Connect

- Feeling low or lonely **isn't just part of getting older**
- Link Workers at your GP practice can connect you to groups, transport and befriending
- **Call a friend today** – you never know who might be lonely

Calderdale Falls Prevention Pathway

Have you had a fall, or do you have a fear of falling?

No
…but I'd like to keep my strength and balance

Did you know?
Social Prescribers and Ageing Well Practitioners can give healthy lifestyle advice and connect you to activities.

Ask your GP surgery.

Stay active at home and in your community

See the movement and exercise resources and tips in this pack.

Yes
Follow the referral pathway below

Self-refer to **Gateway**
01422 393000
gateway@calderdale.gov.uk

NHS services triage your needs and choose the right pathway

The Community Rehabilitation Team assesses you and offers one or more of:

- Home assessment, walking aids and equipment
- A personal home exercise programme
- **Finding Your Feet group exercise**
  Todmorden Health Centre Tue 10:30–11:30am
  YMCA Halifax Wed 1:00–2:00pm
  Brighouse Health Centre Thu 10:30–11:30am

After rehabilitation: signposting to local services, information and community activity

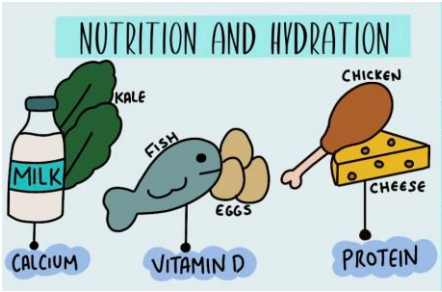
Falls guidelines and resources

Links for self-help guidance and support

NHS – Falls
NICE guidelines (April 2025)
CHFT Falls Prevention Service
Calder Connect falls advice
Movement and exercise resources
Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees
Staying Well
Better Living Service
WYFS Safe & Well visits
Healthy Homes Service



- To stay steady on your feet and keep bones and muscle strong - aim to do strength and balance activity at least twice a week
- Exercise helps build confidence
- Exercise helps improve your mood and your sleep



- A healthy diet can help you keep strong and independent later in life
- Calcium & Vitamin D keep bones strong
- High protein foods help maintain your muscles
- Dehydration can cause dizziness & low blood pressure - drink regularly throughout the day



- Some conditions such as diabetes and dementia can increase your risk of falls
- If you have had a fall, or think you are at risk of a fall, ask for advice from a healthcare professional

Age Friendly Calderdale

Get out and about with confidence

Knowing what to expect before you go – steps, seats, toilets, lighting – helps you **plan ahead and stay steady**.



Look for the Age Friendly sticker

Accredited venues, organisations, parks and green spaces have taken simple steps to welcome older people.

Check the access guide

Photos and plain words show how to get in, where to sit, where the toilets are, and any steps.

Age Friendly accreditation | **Access guides**

Both are free. Tell your local café, shop or community group.

Join the Age Friendly Calderdale Network



Free and open to anyone aged 50+ and organisations that support older people. Run with **Calderdale Forum 50 Plus** and **Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees**, it gives older people a voice. Members get the Forum 50 Plus newsletter.

Sign up to the Network agefriendly@calderdale.gov.uk

Useful contacts



Age UK Calderdale and Kirklees

01422 252040
enquiry@ageukck.org.uk

Age Concern Todmorden

01706 817 926
support@ageconcerntodmorden.org

Gateway – community therapy

01422 393000 gateway@calderdale.gov.uk

Staying Well – stay independent and well

01422 392767 stayingwellproject@nhpltd.org.uk

West Yorkshire Fire – Safe and Well Visits

0800 587 4536 sdah@westyorksfire.gov.uk

Age Friendly Calderdale

Calderdale Falls Prevention Network

Creating healthy, vibrant communities with strong social networks

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