

# Steps you can take to live well and avoid falls



Falls are **not** an inevitable part of getting older.

You should always tell your GP or another health professional if you have a fall as it may be a sign of a new or worsening health condition.

**There are lots of ways to reduce your risk of falling.**

**Start making your action plan today and look at the following checklist.**



Can I reduce my alcohol intake?



Am I getting dizzy frequently?



Do I need to get my eyesight tested?



Is there anything I can do to have a healthy diet?



Do I take my medicine on time and correctly?



Do I need to change my footwear?



Am I well hydrated?



Is my home falls safe?



Am I exercising regularly?



Is my clothing appropriate to prevent a fall?

# Steps to reduce your risk of a fall



## Alcohol

Drinking alcohol frequently significantly increases your risk of a fall.

### I'm going to



**Try to cut back on drinking alcohol regularly.**

If you are concerned, or someone else has expressed concern that you are drinking too much alcohol, contact Inclusion Recovery Isle of Wight at **01983 526654**. If you require out of hours, please contact: **0300 330 2001**.



## Dizziness

There are many possible causes of dizziness, including low blood pressure and inner ear problems.

### I'm going to



**Speak to my GP practice team to find out why I feel dizzy.**



**Change my position slowly and move my arms and legs to boost my blood circulation.**



**Take extra care when getting out of bed and standing up from a chair.**



**Drink plenty of fluids during the day (unless advised otherwise).**



**Arrange a hearing test.**



## Eyesight and hearing

Optimising your eyesight and hearing helps you adjust to your environment and react to hazards to reduce the risk of falling.

### I'm going to

- If I notice any changes in my vision, I will make an appointment with my optician to discuss my concerns.**
- Have a standard eye test every two years at my optician or at home if you have a disability or illness. Eye tests are free if you are over 60, and some opticians do home visits if you cannot get out.**
- If you wear glasses, follow the four Cs:**
  - Make sure my glasses are **correct**.
  - Make sure my glasses are **current**.
  - Make sure my glasses are **clean**.
  - Make sure my glasses are **comfortable** to make the most out of my vision.
- Have a hearing check with the NHS at your GP practice, local pharmacy, or service provider. Wightsense are a free provider who support individuals with sight or hearing loss on: 01983 240222.**



## Healthy diet

Taking part in physical activity and a diet rich in calcium and vitamin D will encourage strong bones and help to prevent brittle bone disease (Osteoporosis). The Isle of Wight Foodbank can support you if you are struggling in the cost-of-living crisis on: 01983 292040.

Isle Find It advice directory can provide contact information with the cost of living crisis at [www.iselfindit.org.uk](http://www.iselfindit.org.uk)

### I'm going to



**Read up about how I can have a healthy diet and strong bones. The Royal Osteoporosis Society can provide useful information and advice at [www.theros.org.uk](http://www.theros.org.uk) and the helpline can provide me with most information on 0808 800 0035**



## Medication

Some medicines and taking many medications can make you more likely to fall.

### I'm going to



**Follow instructions for taking and organising medication.**



**Have a medication review every year. Speak to your GP practice team or pharmacist to make an appointment.**



## Foot care

Keeping your feet and footwear in good condition can help you to stay steady.

### I'm going to

- Take care of my feet, including trimming toenails regularly.
- Wear well-fitting shoes and slippers that are in good condition and support the ankle.
- See a GP or chiropodist about any foot problems.



## Staying hydrated

Drinking plenty of fluids helps to maintain a steady blood pressure and boost the health of your bladder. There are several ways to keep your bladder healthy.

### I'm going to

- Drink six to eight glasses of fluid daily unless your doctor advises otherwise.
- Cut down on caffeinated, carbonated, acidic and alcoholic drinks that irritate the bladder.
- Contact my GP to talk through my concerns with my fluid intake and incontinence.



## Safe home

Many falls occur at home, but some simple actions can reduce the risk.

### I'm going to

- Check my house and remove slip and trip hazards like rugs and wires.
- Use non-slip mats in the bathroom.
- Make sure all rooms and staircases are well-lit.
- Put a light by the bed if I need to get up at night.
- For people who use a Zimmer frame or walking aid, get a professional to review if this is the best walking aid for me to be using and check that it is still in a good condition.
- Some people are eligible for adaptations in their home to help prevent a fall. I am going to contact my local council on 01983 821000 for more information and advice.
- Arrange a Safe and Well visit from Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue by calling: 023 8064 4000. Safe and Well is a free home fire safety visit tailored to your needs. Or for more support at home with health and safety, call the Blue Lamp Trust on 0300 777 0157.

## I'm feeling steady and I want to stay that way.

### I'm going to

- Search on Google for strength and balance classes to help me stay strong and steady at [www.islefindit.org.uk](http://www.islefindit.org.uk)

# Strength and balance opportunities in your community

## You can find further information on these web pages:

- **Get Active Isle of Wight** is a free directory for being active and finding what works for you locally. That could be a short walk in the park, a fitness class in your living room or seated physical activity whilst drinking a cuppa. Get Active can help you find loads of great activities to choose from, however fit (or unfit) you think you feel

[www.getactive.io/isle-of-wight](http://www.getactive.io/isle-of-wight)

- **Isle Find It** is a free directory to help access the information you need, all in one place including local sports clubs and physical activity classes with links to other relevant sites pricings and portals. You can search for general support including wellbeing, finance, accessing benefits and local services

[www.islefindit.org.uk/about-us](http://www.islefindit.org.uk/about-us)



## **Adults aged 65 and over should:**

- Aim to be physically active every day, even if it's just light activity do activities that improve strength, balance and flexibility on at least two days a week.
- Do at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity a week or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity if you are already active, or a combination of both.
- Reduce time spent sitting or lying down and break up long periods of not moving with some activity.
- If you've fallen or are worried about falling, doing physical activity to improve your strength, balance and flexibility will help make you stronger and feel more confident on your feet. For more information visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)



## Physical activity classes

We all have a lot to gain by moving more and breaking up long periods of sitting. These are just some of the examples of the classes which are available across the Island.



**Be active every day and do strength and balance activities, such as circuit or resistance training, ball sports, yoga, or tai chi at least twice a week. Always talk to a fitness instructor first to ensure the class is at the right level for you.**

### 1Leisure Heights – Tel: 01983 823881

- **Forever Fit** – A class designed especially for beginners or those over 50 who want to combine a more active lifestyle with a new social life.
- **Hatha Yoga** – A class adapted for all abilities and ages over 50. Hatha Yoga balances the mind, body and improves flexibility, balance, strength, and concentration through, relaxation, and meditation.

### 1Leisure Medina – Tel: 01983 823880

- **Matwork Pilates** – Suitable for all abilities and ages and aims to improve muscle control, flexibility, strength, and coordination.

### Independent arts, Newport – Tel: 01983 822437

- **Dance Makers** – Gentle, creative dance programme that can help improve balance, mobility, coordination, and strength whilst making friends and having fun.
- **Dance Sense** – Dance sense is a gentle physical activity programme for individuals with a neurological condition that affects their movement.

### West Wight Sports and Community Centre – Tel: 01983 640190

- **Seated Pilates** – Suitable for people of all ages who have difficulty getting down on the floor and prefer the support of a chair.

## Additional services to support you in the community.

### Isle of Wight College

For those looking to develop an understanding on how to prevent falls the Isle of Wight College offer a **free** qualification. Tel: **01983 526631**.

### Wightcare

A service provided by the Isle of Wight Council offering services to those who may need additional support at home. They provide a 24-hour service including a community alarm, Telecare, and Telecheck service. Tel: **01983 821105**.

### Move to Improve NHS strength and balance classes

These **free** NHS classes are designed to boost your strength and balance, particularly if you have suffered a fall or have lost a little confidence. Please speak to your GP or health care professional about a referral to the classes.

### Carers IW

Carers IW can support individuals who may be requiring support on how to access a disabled blue badge, occupational therapy and the independent living skills assessment. Tel: **01983 533173**.

### Citizens Advice Isle of Wight

An independent charity which provides, free, impartial, confidential advice for anyone that needs it. Tel: **0344 411 1444**.

### Age UK Isle of Wight

Age UK offer free digital support services, The good Neighbour scheme, information and advice for over 50s, help around the Home and Welfare benefits advice, which is supporting the Age Friendly Island scheme. Tel: **(01983) 525282**.

If you have difficulty understanding this document, please contact us on 01983 821000 and we will do our best to help you.