



COULD MUM OR DAD BE AT RISK OF A FALL?

A practical family guide for families supporting
an older relative at home.



FAMILY FALLS PREVENTION GUIDE

Spot early warning signs

Simple ways to make home safer



Your Care



Start with what has changed

A fall does not always come out of nowhere. Families often notice small changes first: someone holding onto furniture, becoming less steady, avoiding the stairs or losing confidence about going out.

Tick anything you have noticed recently:

- ☐ Holding onto walls, furniture or another person when walking
- ☐ Taking longer to stand up from a chair or get out of bed
- ☐ More shuffling, stumbling or catching their feet
- ☐ Feeling dizzy, light-headed or unsteady
- ☐ A recent fall, slip or near miss
- ☐ Avoiding stairs, the shower, the garden or going out alone
- ☐ Getting up several times during the night to use the toilet
- ☐ Changes in eyesight or hearing
- ☐ New medication, medication changes or feeling sleepy after medicines
- ☐ Eating or drinking less than usual



Worth knowing

If Mum or Dad has already had a fall, or you are worried about their balance or mobility, speak to their GP. A GP may review balance, medicines and possible causes, and may refer to a falls service.

A 10-minute home falls check

Walk through the home as if you were seeing it for the first time. The aim is not to strip away independence. It is to remove avoidable hazards and make everyday tasks easier.



Floors and walkways

- Remove or secure loose rugs and trailing wires
- Keep walkways clear of clutter, bags and low furniture
- Check for uneven or slippery flooring



Lighting

- Make sure hallways, stairs and the route to the toilet are well lit
- Keep a bedside light or easy-to-reach lamp nearby
- Replace dim bulbs



Bathroom

- Use a non-slip mat in the bath or shower
- Consider grab rails where they would genuinely help
- Keep toiletries and towels within easy reach



Stairs and steps

- Keep stairs free from objects
- Check handrails are secure
- Make sure step edges are easy to see



Everyday reaching

- Move frequently used items to an easier height
- Avoid climbing on stools or chairs
- Ask for help with lifting or awkward tasks



One useful question

Is there anything at home you have stopped doing because you are worried you might fall?



Your Care

5 THINGS FAMILIES OFTEN OVERLOOK

Small everyday details can make a bigger difference than families realise.

1

Shoes and slippers

Well-fitting footwear with a good grip can reduce slipping. Slippers that are loose, worn or easy to step out of can be a problem.



2

Strength and balance

Regular activity helps maintain strength and balance. Older adults are encouraged to stay active and include strength and balance activity during the week, where appropriate.



3

Food and fluids

Not eating or drinking enough can contribute to weakness, light-headedness or faintness.



4

Eyesight and hearing

Changes in vision can make steps and hazards harder to judge. Ear problems can also affect balance.



5

Medicines

Some medicines can contribute to dizziness, sleepiness or low blood pressure. Speak to a GP or pharmacist if balance seems to have changed.



Do not assume it is 'just age'

A change in balance, walking or confidence can have several causes. If the change is new, worsening or unexplained, it is worth discussing with a healthcare professional.



Your Care

If a fall happens

The most important thing is not to rush. Check for pain or injury first and follow medical advice where needed.

If they feel able to get up

- 1 Take your time and do not stand up too quickly
- 2 Roll onto your side, then use your arms to move onto hands and knees
- 3 Move towards something stable and sturdy
- 4 Bring one foot forward, stand slowly while holding the support, then sit and rest



If they do not feel able to get up

- 1 Use a phone or personal alarm if one is within reach
- 2 Call out or make noise to attract attention
- 3 Keep warm with a coat, towel, blanket or anything reachable
- 4 Keep the body moving gently and change position if possible while waiting for help



CALL 999

If they may have injured their head, back, neck or hip, or they cannot get up.



CONTACT NHS 111

If they have fallen and may be in pain, injured or unwell, but it does not appear to be a life-threatening emergency.

Do not try to lift someone yourself if they cannot get up safely.



Your Care



A SIMPLE FAMILY ACTION PLAN



Choose a few realistic actions rather than trying to change everything in one day.

- ☐ Book an eye test or hearing check if one is overdue
- ☐ Ask a pharmacist or GP about medicines if dizziness or sleepiness has changed
- ☐ Remove loose rugs, clutter or trailing cables
- ☐ Improve lighting on stairs and the route to the toilet
- ☐ Check shoes and slippers fit properly and have good grip
- ☐ Keep a phone or personal alarm within reach
- ☐ Encourage regular food and drinks throughout the day
- ☐ Talk about suitable strength and balance activity
- ☐ Arrange a GP appointment after a fall or if mobility is becoming a concern



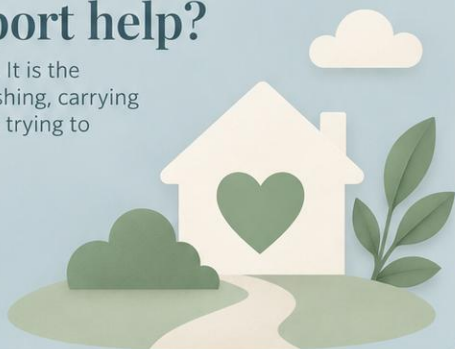
*Small steps
make a big
difference*



Could practical support help?

Sometimes the risk is not one single hazard. It is the combination of tiredness, missed meals, rushing, carrying shopping, struggling with household jobs or trying to manage tasks that have become harder.

- Meal preparation and drinks
- Shopping and household tasks
- Companionship and getting out
- Personal care
- Medication prompts
- Regular wellbeing visits



Talk to Your Care



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Your Care