

# Falls and Food in the Elderly

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# Falls and Food in the Elderly

- Definition
- Impact of falls
- Why do people fall?
- What can be done?
- Relevance to dietitians

# Falls and Food in the Elderly

## Definition: what is a fall?

- A fall can be defined as  
“an event whereby an individual comes to rest on the ground or another lower level with or without loss of consciousness”

Other definitions include a reference to an involuntary act!

Also included may be a reference to “from standing height or below” to exclude ski-jumping etc!

# Falls and Food in the Elderly

- On this basis

How many of you have fallen?

It's not just older people who fall but reduced strength, impaired balance and slower reactions may mean an slip, trip or stumble turns into a fall.

**Falling is not an inevitable result of ageing  
– many falls can be prevented**

# Falls and Food in the Elderly

## Why are falls in older people important?

- Falls are common – 1 in 3 65+ fall in any year
- That rises to 1 in 2 85+
- Up to 60% of admissions to residential care are due to falling or the fear of falling
- In Bucks c 1500 65+ are admitted to hospital after a fall each year
- Older people are more likely to fracture
- 95% of hip fractures are caused by a fall
- Hip fractures cause loss of independence in at least 60% of patients
- Hip fractures cost £1.8 billion per year to health and social care

# Falls and Food in the Elderly

## Other Costs

- Falls can cost the individual dear – pain, suffering, loss of confidence leading to social isolation.....
- Falls can cost the family/carers dear – increased need for assistance, increased anxiety, effect on their health....

# Falls and Food in the Elderly

RISK FACTORS	Intrinsic	Extrinsic
<b>Modifiable</b>	Fear of falling      Poor nutrition Problems of strength and balance Sight especially contrast sensitivity and depth perception Hearing                      Depression Postural hypotension   Hypothermia Syncope                      Acute illness Gait and transfer problems Continence problems      Low BMI Confusion                      Dehydration	Footwear Clothing Multi-focal glasses Home environment Medication Alcohol
<b>Non-modifiable</b>	Age Gender History of falling Cognitive impairment	Weather Pavement state

# BUCKS FALLS PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES

## Primary prevention

### AgeWell Bucks

Leaflets

Media

Events eg. Senior Wellbeing Fairs with screening, advice, walking aid MOTs and slipper exchanges

Website: [www.bucksfallsprevention.co.uk](http://www.bucksfallsprevention.co.uk)

Education/ Awareness sessions eg. with ethnic minority groups; Bucks Carers

## Assessment and intervention

MDT specialist assessment in 3 Day Hospitals (SMH, Wycombe, Amersham) with geriatrician input

A&E and domiciliary falls specialist assessment

Get Fit, Avoid Falls – group programme of progressive strength & balance exercise and education

Individual falls Programmes at Thame & Buckingham  
*Need to add Aylesbury, Wycombe, Amersham/Chesham*

Level 2 assessment by community staff

Level 1 assessment by all staff working with older people

Supported by a rolling, competency based, multi- agency training programme (2 levels) for all who work with older people.

## Identification

# Website




Buckinghamshire Falls and Fractures Prevention - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help


Back Search Favorites

Address <http://www.buckinghamshirefallsprevention.co.uk/> Go Links

**FALLS**  
Prevention and Management Programme  
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE



Text Size: [Small](#) [Medium](#) [Large](#)



## Welcome to our website

Welcome to Buckinghamshire's Falls and Fracture prevention website.

Falls are the most common type of accident in the home. 30% of people over 65 years falls at home.

Preventing falls is not an easy task. The causes of falls are varied and highly complex, but there are a great number of simple practical steps that can be done to reduce the risk.

The website aims to provide information for all those who are concerned with the issue around falls.

This website is supported by:

- Chiltern & South Buckinghamshire Primary Care Trust
- Vale of Aylesbury Primary Care Trust
- Wycombe Primary Care Trust
- Buckinghamshire NHS Hospital Trust
- Buckinghamshire Mental Health NHS Trust

[Click here for the Buckinghamshire](#)

Home Page  
Information  
Lifestyle management  
Osteoporosis  
Hip Protectors  
Information for professionals  
National Falls awareness day  
Falls and Fractures Prevention in Buckinghamshire  
Other prevention work in Buckinghamshire  
Latest News  
Web Site Feedback  
Web Site Links  
Disclaimer

start Microsoft PowerPoint ... Inbox - Microsoft Out... Document2 - Microsof... Buckinghamshire Falls... EN 09:06

# Falls and Food in the Elderly

## Preventive advice

- Remain/become physically active
- Maintain mobility
- Have hearing & vision checked regularly
- Keep hydrated
- Eat a balanced diet including dairy products and bony fish
- Try to get out into daylight every day
- Look after feet, wear well-fitting footwear
- Light stairs and hallways well
- Use a nightlight or put on the light at night
- Get up slowly from lying or sitting
- Don't rush to answer the door or phone
- Consider a pendant alarm

# Safety Leaflet

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**Regular physical activity  
will help to keep you  
fit and healthy**

(and reduce your risk of falling)

**Activities such as:**

Housework  
Gardening  
Exercise classes – all count

**Include exercises for:**

Co-ordination  
Balance  
Strengthening and flexibility

**You should aim to build up to  
30 minutes of activity on  
at least 3 days of the week**

You may find the following websites  
helpful:

[www.helptheaged.org.uk](http://www.helptheaged.org.uk)  
[www.balancetraining.org.uk](http://www.balancetraining.org.uk)  
[www.bucksfallsprevention.co.uk](http://www.bucksfallsprevention.co.uk)

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**If you do have a fall and  
hurt yourself then ...**

**STOP – THINK – PLAN**

**ATTRACT HELP!**

Use your care alarm pendant  
or crawl to a telephone  
or bang on the floor  
or shout

Try to get up

**If you can't get up:**

**KEEP WARM**

Cover yourself with anything to hand  
e.g. a towel, a rug, a blanket

**KEEP MOVING**

Move the parts of your body that  
do not hurt to stop pressure on the  
bony parts

**And afterwards –  
Do not forget to tell  
your GP or health  
professional that you  
have had a fall**

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FALLS

Prevention and Management  
Programme

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

**Living Well,  
Safely at  
Home**

Ideas for you  
and your home,  
especially for  
older people

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# Safety Leaflet (page 2)

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**Falls can and do happen to everyone, but many can be prevented. Making some simple changes can help you continue to live well and safely at home**

## Carry out a room by room checklist of your home

### Living Room

- Check for trip hazards such as loose wires and rugs
- Remove objects which may be tripped over and keep walkways clear

### Kitchen

- Avoid over stretching or bending
- Keep things within easy reach
- Avoid climbing on chairs and stools
- Clean up spills immediately

### Bathroom

- Use a non-slip mat in the bath
  - Use grab rails by the bath and toilet
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### Bedroom

- Turn on the lights at night when getting out of bed (use low energy light bulbs or night lights)
- Keep a torch beside your bed in case of a power cut
- Avoid wearing long trailing nightwear
- Avoid leaving books and magazines lying on the floor beside the bed

### Stairs and Hallway

- Use the handrail and make sure it is secure
- Remove objects from stairs
- Put marker strips on the edge of stairs so you can see them easily
- Avoid carrying loads up and down stairs
- Make sure halls and stairs are well lit. Use a 100 watt bulb

### Outside

- Leave an outside light on when returning home at night
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## Some other things to consider

- Look after your feet, wear proper fitting footwear
  - Have your eyes and hearing checked regularly (NHS sight tests are free to over 60 year olds)
  - If you take more than four medications daily, ask your GP to review your medications and ask about their side effects
  - To avoid giddiness get out of bed, or up from a chair in slow stages
  - Do not rush to answer the door or phone
  - Consider a pendant alarm
  - Eat well, take at least six hot or cold drinks a day
  - Increase your daily intake of calcium (found in dairy produce and sardines) and Vitamin D (through sunlight)
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# Falls and Food in the Elderly



# Falls and Food in the Elderly

## Assessment

- 1. Is there a history of any fall in the previous year?** Y/N  
**Includes the presenting fall. How assessed?** Ask the person.
- 2. Is patient / client on 4 or more medications per day?** Y/N  
**How assessed?** Identify number of prescribed medications.
- 3. Does the patient / client, have a diagnosis of stroke or Parkinson's disease?** Y/N  
**How assessed?** Ask the person.
- 4. Does patient / client, report any problems with their balance?** Y/N  
**How assessed?** Ask the person.
- 5. Is patient / client unable to rise from a knee height chair without using arms?** Y/N  
**How assessed?** Ask the person to stand up from a chair of knee height without using their arms to do so.

**Screening Tool 1**

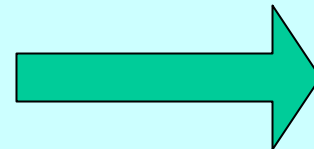
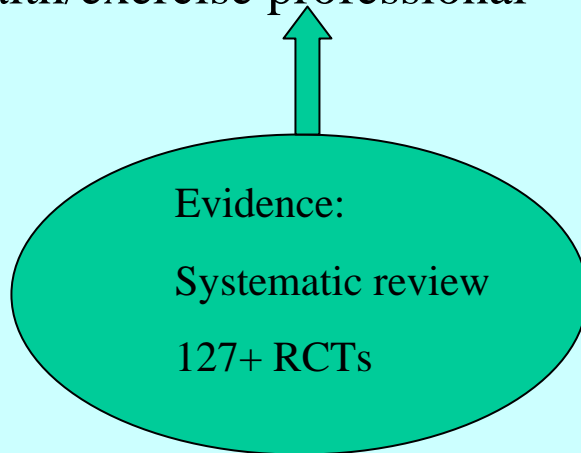
**Total score =**



# Falls and Food in the Elderly

Falls prevention strategies likely to be effective 1999-2005

- Individually tailored
- Delivered by a health/exercise professional



OT assessment  
& modification (fallers)

Withdrawal of psychotropic  
medications

Cardiac pacing for fallers  
with CCSH

Multi-factorial interventions

Exercise programmes  
(independent community)

Expedited cataract surgery

# Falls and Food in the Elderly

## Where do dietitians fit in?

- Primary prevention
  - basic nutrition at home, in hospital/care home
  - Calcium and vitamin D intake to reduce fracture risk
- Intervention for low BMI
- Dehydration
  - continence issues
- High alcohol intake
- Hypoglycaemia in diabetes
- Identification and referral of fallers

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