

MAKING your HOME your HAVEN



Practical ways to stay independent

Take a fresh look at your house to see if it is helping you to stay independent and active. Do you and your house still suit each other? Sometimes little changes can make a big difference. Sometimes it is better to move to a more suitable house.

More than 6 out of 10 slips, trips and falls happen in and around the home. Hazards are easy to overlook but can be easy to fix. Check for home hazards regularly and get them fixed.

What can you do inside your home?

- > If you use a walking aid, make sure you have enough space to use it safely.
- > Remove clutter including mats, rugs and trailing electrical cords, or have them well secured.
- > Make sure there is good lighting throughout the home and outside walkways (16 or 20 watt energy saving, 75 or 100 watt incandescent globes). Turn the light on when moving about.
- > Consider getting grab rails and other equipment/aids that may make things easier and safer for longer.
- > Store items within easy reach. This will reduce your need to bend down low, or climb on a chair or ladder.
- > If you have to reach a high place, use a safe step ladder with wide steps and a handrail.
- > Mop up spills. Consider using non-slip surfaces like rubber or suction bath mats in wet areas.
- > Be aware of your pets, their toys or droppings.





What can you do outside your home?

- > Clearly mark the edges of steps and paths with coloured non-slip strips so that they can be seen day and night.
- > Keep paths clear and clean and get uneven paths fixed. Councils can advise and assist with these tasks.
- > Wear hearing aid/s (if you use them) and safe footwear.
- > Use your walking aid if you have one.
- > Wear the correct glasses for what you are doing (e.g. distance glasses for moving around; reading glasses for close up work)



- > Many serious falls happen when using a ladder. Ask for help from family, friends or the council, even if you have to wait for the job to be done.

Who can help?

- > Your **doctor** for any concerns about how well your home suits you. Your doctor can refer you to other health professionals or any services you may be eligible for.
- > **Occupational therapists** can help identify hazards around the home and ways to maximise your independence. To find an occupational therapist near you near you (no referral is needed), phone **Commonwealth Carelink** 1800 052 222, or **OT Australia** (08) 8332 6600.
- > Your **Local Council**.
- > The **Independent Living Centre** for advice regarding aids and equipment 1300 885 886, (08) 8266 5260 or www.disability.sa.gov.au

For a checklist of how to make your home safer, ask your doctor or health professional.

For more information

Adelaide area: Call 1300 0 FALLS (1300 0 32557) for information about falls prevention services that are close to you.

Country SA: Please contact your local health service for information about services close to you. You can also email the Country Health Falls Prevention coordinator at Health.CHSAFallsPreventionProject@health.sa.gov.au

www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/falls

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This document has been reviewed and endorsed by SA Health PwC&CAG* for consumers and the community, March 2015.

*SA Health Partnering with Consumers and Community Advisory Group



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