



# Winter Wellness – Stay Safe, Stay Warm



It may be cold outside, but winter needn't be the unhealthiest time of year for you and your family.

This booklet is designed to give you some hints, tips and ideas about staying safe at home and how to avoid slips, trips and falls. It is packed with useful advice and information about staying warm, keeping well and being happy and safe this winter

We've also included some guidance around making your home warmer and safer, as well as a quick guide to a strength and balance activity which can aid co-ordination.

In addition, there's a list of useful contacts which may be helpful during the winter months.



## Contents

### Page no.

3	Staying Well at Home
4	Guide to home hazards
5	Avoiding slips, trips and falls
6	Fall risk checklist
7	Staying steady on your feet
8	Strength and balance activities
9	Useful contacts

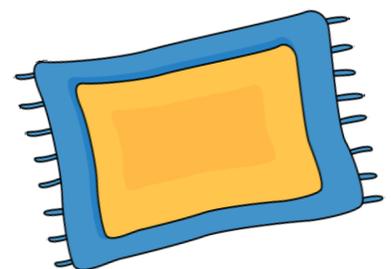
## Staying Well at Home

- Keep a good stock of salt and sand for frozen pathways.
- Stock up on your medications. Some pharmacies can offer a pickup and delivery service.
- Stock up on essential foods such as long life milk, Tins of soup, Tinned veg etc. Freeze bread in small batches (2 slices).
- Keep a torch by your bed side in case of a power failure or you need to go to the loo frequently and can't reach your light switch.(stock spare batteries)
- Keep a list of useful contact numbers by your phone. (see list)
- Adapt your home for winter conditions i.e. hand rails, lighting etc.(Handy man contact on useful contact numbers list)
- Make sure you are claiming all the benefits that you are entitled to.(contact list)
- Check all electrical appliances (including electric blankets) and make sure cords and plugs are in a good state of repair.
- Use a hot water bottle or an electric blanket to keep warm in bed-But do not use both at the same time.
- Keep your main room and your bedroom temperature at between 18.c and 21.c (65.f-75.f)
- Use your curtains and any draught stops to keep the heat in and make sure your doors are shut.
- Wear warm clothing to keep warm around the home.
- Have at least one hot meal a day and have plenty of hot drinks.
- Eat regular meals if possible as this helps you maintain energy levels during winter periods.
- When going out doors make sure you wear warm clothes and shoes that have a good grip especially in winter conditions.
- Are you up to date with your flu jab. (65years + Free)
- Keep in contact with your family and friends especially if you can't visit them to let them know you are safe.
- Keep active-If you can't get out and about use the chair based exercise program provided.
- Get your heating system checked regularly by a qualified professional.
- If you are able look in on vulnerable neighbours, friends and relatives to make sure they are well.



## Avoiding Home Hazards

- Good lighting – on stairways and throughout the home.
- Keep a torch by your bed or install a night light.
- Keep stairways clear.
- Keep floors clear of clutter and trailing cables.
- Be mindful of frayed rugs and carpets.
- Use hand rails when going up or down stairs. Look to get a handy man to fit if necessary.
- Use a non-slip mat in the bathroom when using the bath or shower.
- Use hand rails when using the bath or shower.
- Use grips under rugs and runners.
- Does your pet have a bell on its collar? Pets can get under your feet and cause you to trip
- Always ask for help when reaching for something high.
- Never stand on a chair - store items at a safe level to minimise risk.
- Garden paths should be clear of moss. Watch out for uneven or slippery surfaces. Well-lit paths and carefully placed rails and posts would be helpful where necessary.
- Make sure your smoke alarms are in good working order.



## Avoiding slips, trips and falls

1. Never walk on hard floors whilst wearing socks or tights. Wear new slippers or grip socks.
2. Never wear badly fitting shoes. Your feet change shape as we age so a well-fitting shoe is vital.
3. Don't shuffle walk. Try to lift your feet as high as you can when walking.
4. Trailing clothes – Tie belts or cords on clothes and dressing gowns. Long fitting dressing gowns could cause you to trip. Hem clothing that is long fitting.
5. Worn out slippers- Old slippers are like old friends. You need to let go and say goodbye if they have holes in their soles, frayed uppers or if they are sloppy fitting. Slippers need to be well fitting and provide a good grip.



## Fall Risk Checklist

- I have had a recent fall but have not told anyone.
- My GP has not reviewed my medication in the past year.
- I often get up during the night for the loo.
- I am not as active as what is recommended (5 x 30 minutes of moderate activity per week).
- I sometimes feel dizzy or light headed on standing or walking.
- I struggle with basic maintenance on my home.
- I wear bi-focals or varifocals.
- I haven't had an eye test in 12months.
- I sometimes feel weak when getting up from a chair or bed.
- Clutter has built up in my home over the years.
- I don't drink enough fluids (1.6-2ltrs per day).
- My slippers are old and have that 'lived in' look.
- Taking care of my feet is quite difficult these days.
- I have a long term health condition such as Stroke, COPD, dementia etc.
- I save on electricity by turning off unnecessary lights.
- My alcohol intake is probably more that the recommended guidelines (14 units per week).
- I don't get out as much as I would like because I worry about tripping. I feel unsteady.
- If I did have a fall I would be too embarrassed to tell anyone.
- I often get my feet tangled up in things that could trip me; my pets and grandchildren worry me sometimes as they make me feel wobbly!
- I am not always that warm at home.

*If you have ticked any of the boxes in the checklist above, it may be a good idea to take further action in order to avoid increasing your risk of slips, trips and falls. For example, your GP, support team or one of the organisations on page 10 of this booklet.*

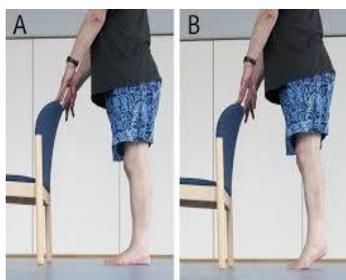


## Staying steady on your feet

- **Exercise regularly** – chair based activity is perfect! (see 5 step guide to strength and balance activities)
- **Get your eyes and your hearing checked regularly.** This could identify problems affecting your balance.
- **Look after your feet.** See your GP or a podiatrist if you have any issues with your feet. Wear good fitting shoes and slippers.
- **Medicines** – If you have any concerns regarding your medications let your GP or your Pharmacist know so adjustments can be carried out.
- **Good balanced diet** – Eat a good balanced diet based around the essential food groups. (Eatwell guide).
- **Check your home for hazards** (see page 3)

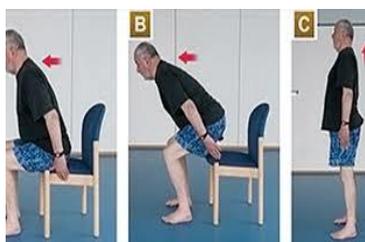


## 5 Activities for Strength and Balance



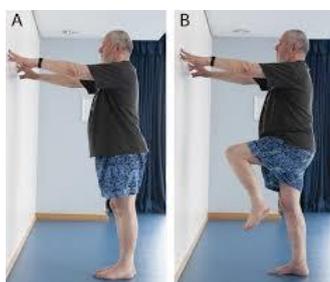
### Heel Raises

Stand tall holding the back of a sturdy chair or kitchen sink, and then lift your heels off the floor, taking your weight onto your big toes. Hold for 3 seconds then lower with control. Repeat 10 times.



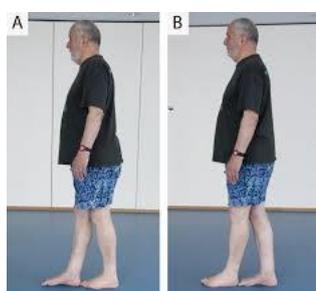
### Sit to Stand

Sit tall near the front of the chair with your feet slightly back. Lean forwards and stand up (Use chair if needed). Step back until your legs touch the chair then slowly lower back into the chair. Repeat 10 times.



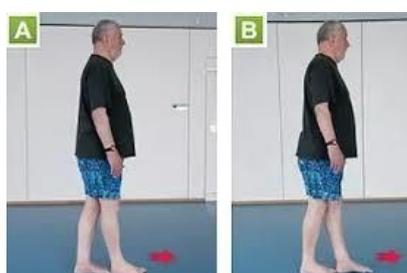
### One leg stand

Stand close to your support (wall or chair) and hold it. Balance on one leg, keeping the support knee soft and your posture upright. Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat the process on



### Heel toe stand

Stand tall, with one hand on your support (if required). Put one foot in front of the other. Look ahead take your hand off the support and balance for 10 seconds. Repeat with the other foot.



### Heel toe walk

Stand tall, with one hand on a support (If required). Look ahead and walk 10 steps forward. Place one foot in front of the other in a straight line. Aim for a steady walking action. Turn round and repeat in the other

## Useful Contacts



Wellbeing For Life Service-Health and wellbeing support	0800 8766887 <a href="mailto:cdda-tr.WBFL@nhs.net">cdda-tr.WBFL@nhs.net</a> <a href="http://www.wellbeingforlife.net">www.wellbeingforlife.net</a>
Age UK County Durham	0191386 3856 <a href="mailto:info@ageukcountydurham.org.uk">info@ageukcountydurham.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.ageukcountydurham.org.uk">www.ageukcountydurham.org.uk</a>
Age UK Telephone befriending service	0191 384 5098 <a href="mailto:info@ageukcountydurham.org.uk">info@ageukcountydurham.org.uk</a>
Care connect	0800 434 6105
Locate	<a href="http://www.durhamlocate.org.uk">www.durhamlocate.org.uk</a>
Police(non-emergency)	101
Social care direct (for concerns about someone's welfare)	03000 267 979
Durham County Cares Support	03000 051 213
Consumer Advice Helpline	0345 404 0506
Durham County Council	03000 260 000
Handy Person Service	0300 456 2220
Link 2 Dial-a-ride service	03000 269 999
Home fire and crime safety advice (Fire and Police)	0845 223 4221
Northumbria Water helpline	0345 717 1100(24hours)
NHS Choices	<a href="http://www.nhs.uk/healthy-bones">www.nhs.uk/healthy-bones</a> <a href="http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/falls">www.nhs.uk/conditions/falls</a>
Royal Osteoporosis Society	Helpline- 08088000035 <a href="http://www.theos.org.uk">www.theos.org.uk</a>
Durham Savers DCC	07584262676
Winter fuel Payment(Government run information helpline)	0800 731 0160 <a href="http://www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment">www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment</a>
Citizens advice-Consumer	0345 404 0506 <a href="http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer">www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer</a>
Victim Support	0808 168 9111 <a href="http://www.victimsupport.org.uk">www.victimsupport.org.uk</a>
Shelter(housing problems)	0808 800 4444 <a href="http://england.shelter.org.uk">england.shelter.org.uk</a>
Disability Rights UK	<a href="http://www.disabilityrightsuk.org">www.disabilityrightsuk.org</a> <a href="http://www.durham.gov.uk/DurhamSavers">www.durham.gov.uk/DurhamSavers</a>
NHS 111(Non-life threatening 24-hour helpline)	111 <a href="http://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/urgent-and-emergency-care/nhs-111/">www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/urgent-and-emergency-care/nhs-111/</a>

MIND(Mental health issues)	0300 123 3393(or text 86463) <a href="http://www.mind.org.uk">www.mind.org.uk</a>
Alzheimer's Society	0300 222 1122 <a href="http://www.alzheimers.org.uk">www.alzheimers.org.uk</a>
Samaritans(24 hour support)	116 123 e-mail: <a href="mailto:jo@samaritans.org">jo@samaritans.org</a> <a href="http://www.samaritans.org">www.samaritans.org</a>



All information contained within this leaflet is from the following approved sources:



[www.wellbeingforlife.net](http://www.wellbeingforlife.net)

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