



**ACT**  
Government  
Health

# Staying ACTIVE Upright and Independent

A guide to healthy ageing in the ACT



## Acknowledgment of Country

ACT Health acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Ngunnawal people. ACT Health respects their continuing culture and connections to the land and the unique contributions they make to the life of this area. ACT Health also acknowledges and welcomes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who are part of the community we serve.

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# INTRODUCTION

In 2013, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) released a report into hospitalisations that were due to falls in older people, it found approximately 92,150 Australians aged 65 years or older were hospitalised for falls related injuries during 2010–11.

In the ACT, the Chief Health Officer's Report 2014 also found that falls-related injuries were the most common cause of hospitalisations during 2012–14. Falls accounted for 34.6% of hospitalised injuries for all adults, and in comparison hospitalisation from land transport accidents only accounted for 11.1% of all injuries.

The good news is:

- Most falls are preventable
- Injuries from falls can be minimised
- Ageing does not have mean a loss of independence
- Help and advice about falls is available.

## Using this booklet

This book will help you identify your risk factors for falls. Knowing and addressing your risk factors as soon as possible can greatly reduce your risk of falling, and keep you fit, healthy and on your feet.

This booklet contains practical tips for maintaining your strength and balance, and becoming more aware of the personal and environmental factors that can cause falls both inside and outside of the house.

The information contained in this booklet is provided for informational, educational or learning purposes only, and is not a substitute for professional medical advice. You should not use the information in this booklet for diagnosing or treating a medical or health or suspected medical or health condition. Any action on your part in response to the information provided in the site is at the readers' discretion.

# STAYING ACTIVE

Staying physically active is the single most important thing you can do to stay fit and independent. Physical activity improves bone strength and slows osteoporosis, keeps the heart strong, and improves your overall health and wellbeing. Remaining active will also give you better muscle strength, will keep your joints mobile and help to maintain your sense of balance.

Good balance is a key factor in keeping you upright. Balance can be affected by some medicines and inner ear problems as well as by stiff joints, muscle weakness and impaired vision. Quick or sudden movements, e.g. getting up from a lying or sitting position, can lead to dizziness or loss of balance.

Your GP or health professional can help you identify the cause of any dizziness or balance issues and give appropriate advice on starting a physical activity regime.

## How much activity is enough?

At least 30 minutes of physical activity a day, five days a week is recommended by Australia's Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines. It doesn't have to be done all in one go; being active in 10–15 minute slots during the day works just as well. The exercise should be brisk enough to increase your breathing and heart rate, although you should still be able to talk.

Activities to get your heart rate up and help build fitness include:

- brisk walking
- group exercise classes
- swimming and aqua aerobics
- golf.

It's also important to include activities that improve your sense of balance and increase your strength, and these can form part of your every day routine.

Remember age is no barrier –research shows that exercise at any age can achieve results. However, please talk to your doctor before starting any new physical activity.



Activities which are particularly good for balance and flexibility include:

- Tai Chi
- exercises in a group, at home, or at a gym
- lawn bowls
- dancing
- pilates
- yoga
- gardening and housework.

If a more customised exercise program is recommended, this can be prescribed by a physiotherapist or exercise physiologist.



## Walking Tall

As you get older, the way you walk can change. This may be:

- not lifting the feet high enough
- shorter steps with a tendency to shuffle
- leaning forward (stooping) when walking.

## Tips for walking

- Stand as tall as possible
- With each step, place the heel on the ground first
- Take full steps
- Let the arms swing naturally by the side
- Try to scan ahead instead of looking down.

## Walking aids

A walking aid may help to improve your safety and mobility. Talk to a health professional, such as a physiotherapist or occupational therapist, for advice on the most suitable aid and how to use it safely and confidently. Remember when using a walking aid at home, you may need to rearrange the furniture so that you can move around easily.

# EXERCISE AT HOME

The following balance and strength exercises are easy to do at home. Make sure you have a benchtop or wall nearby for support. Try to find ways to incorporate these into your usual activities.

## 1 Heel to toe standing

Helps to improve your balance especially if you have to walk through a narrow space.

- With weight evenly distributed between both feet, stand heel to toe.
- Hold the position for 10 seconds. Do the same with the other foot in front.
- If you feel very unsteady, place your feet wider apart (i.e. not quite in line) and lightly touch the wall or bench for support.
- Progress by walking heel to toe or adding another activity (as shown).



## 2 Knee raises

Helps with climbing stairs and getting in and out of cars and buses.

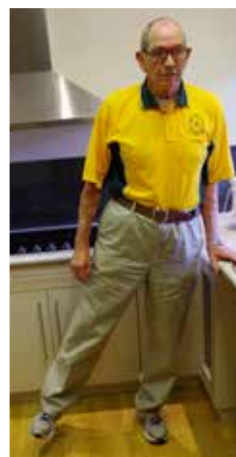
- Lift the knee to hip level and, with fingertips on a solid surface, hold for 5 seconds.
- Repeat 8 times on each leg.



## 3 Side leg raises

Improves stability when having to take weight on one leg e.g. stepping sideways.

- With fingertips on a solid surface, stand on one leg and raise the other leg out to the side. Remember to keep looking forwards and keep the back straight.
- Hold for 5 seconds.
- Repeat 8 times on each leg.
- This can also be practised by walking sideways without support.





## 4 Heel Raises

Helps with walking and climbing stairs.

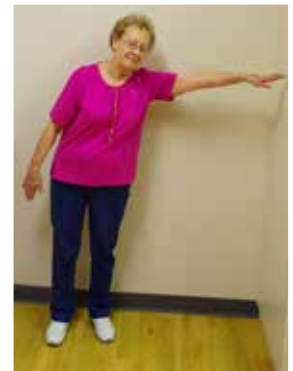
- Lift both heels off the floor and stand on your toes for 3 seconds before lowering your heels slowly to the floor.
- Place fingertips on the bench\wall only if needed.
- Repeat 8 times.



## 5 Reaching

Helps to improve balance.

- Stand just out of arm's length from a solid surface such as a cupboard or wall.
- Keeping your feet on the floor, reach until your fingertips touch the surface.
- Repeat 5 times.
- This can be done forwards or sideways.



## 6 Sit to stand

Helps in getting up from a chair, toilet and in and out of a car.

- Stand up slowly from a chair, keeping your knees slightly apart. To make it harder, cross your arms in front of your chest.
- Lower slowly back into the chair.
- Repeat 8 times.
- If necessary, start by using a chair with armrests, but aim to make the legs do as much of the work as possible.



# KEEPING HEALTHY

It is important to manage your health by having regular check-ups with your GP. Discuss any changes or concerns even if you are “just not feeling right.”

Conditions that may increase your falls risk include:

- Arthritis
- Parkinson’s Disease
- Dementia
- Depression
- Stroke
- Diabetes
- Osteoporosis
- High or low blood pressure
- Vertigo
- Incontinence
- Postural Hypotension – a significant lowering of blood pressure with a change of position e.g. lying to standing.



Some of these conditions may cause you to be unsteady on your feet, have blurred vision, feel dizzy or light headed.

Some short term illnesses such as the flu, diarrhoea and urinary tract infections can make you feel less steady. See your GP as soon as possible if you are feeling unwell.

You can manage your health conditions by:

- staying active
- eating a nutritious diet incorporating the five food groups (see page 32 for details) and having three meals a day
- drinking plenty of water.

If you consume alcohol make sure it is in moderation. An excess slows your reaction time and can make you unsteady. The Australian Drug Foundation recommends no more than two standard drinks a day with two days of abstinence in a week.

# CONTINENCE

Problems with incontinence (both urinary and faecal) may contribute to the risk of a fall by having to rush to the toilet. Incontinence may be due to poor bladder and bowel habits, or the weakening of muscles that support the internal organs including the bladder and bowel (pelvic floor muscles).

Regular bladder and bowel habits are important, and would usually consist of:

- bladder empties 4–8 times a day,
- bladder waking you up no more than 1–2 times a night
- bladder telling you when it is full, but allowing enough time to get to the toilet without leaking
- bowel movements up to three times a day or three times a week
- bowel motions should be soft yet well-formed.

## Tips to prevent incontinence

To prevent incontinence you should:

- cut down on alcohol, fizzy drinks and caffeinated drinks (tea, coffee) as they may irritate the bladder
- do your pelvic floor muscle exercises regularly
- only go to the toilet when you need to not ‘just in case’
- eat plenty of fibre; this improves bowel function by absorbing water and adding bulk to your stools
- exercise for 30 minutes on most days as this stimulates the bowel.

## Having a routine is important

- knowing how long you will be out of the house, and making sure you know where the nearest public toilets are can reduce the risk of a fall brought on by rushing to find a toilet.
- before you leave the house, plan where the nearest public toilets are and make sure they are accessible to you by using the National Public Toilet Map at: [toiletmap.gov.au](http://toiletmap.gov.au)
- alter your diet and fluids when out of the house (if these impact your symptoms) to reduce the amount of times you need to use the toilet.

**Drink 6–8 cups of fluid a day unless advised otherwise by your GP.**

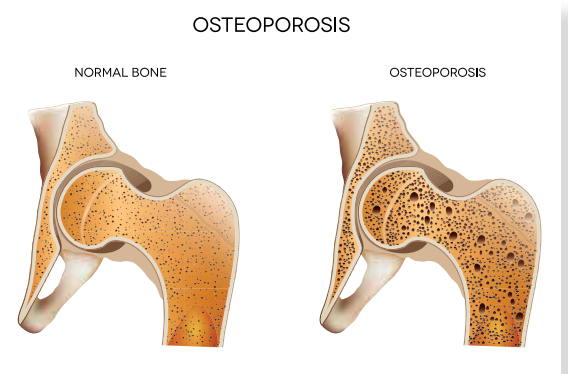
**For more information see services listed on pages 26–32**

# OSTEOPOROSIS

Osteoporosis occurs when the struts which make up the mesh-like structure within the bones become thin causing them to become fragile. This makes them easy to break.

The most susceptible areas for osteoporotic fractures are in the spine, wrist and hip. Fragility fractures commonly occur from falls from a standing height or less, and they may also occur from minor body movements such as sneezing, coughing or rolling over in bed.

The broken bones that result from osteoporosis can cause pain and difficulty getting around or managing your usual daily activities. Broken bones may heal normally but there can be long-term effects. Breaking a hip may have a major impact on your ability to live independently.



## Factors that may increase the risk of osteoporosis

- Being female
- Older age
- Previous history of fragility fracture
- Family history of osteoporosis or a fragility fracture
- Early menopause
- Long term use of corticosteroids for asthma and rheumatoid arthritis.

Certain chronic diseases may also increase the risk of developing osteoporosis such as chronic liver or kidney disease, rheumatoid arthritis and inflammatory bowel disease such as Crohn's disease.

## Diagnosis

Osteoporosis can be diagnosed by assessing the bone density with a DEXA scan. This test requires a doctor's referral and is performed at a medical imaging unit.

## Reducing your risk of developing osteoporosis?

The ideal preventer of osteoporosis is to have strong bone laid down when young. The peak bone density occurs at around 30 years of age, however certain lifestyle changes can help reduce your risk of developing osteoporosis.

- Stop smoking and minimise your alcohol intake to less than 10 standard drinks a week
- Consume 3–4 serves of calcium a day to ensure you get enough calcium
- Increase the amount of weight bearing exercise to 30 minutes 5 times a week.

## What is the best type of exercise for strong bones?

To have an effect on bone, weight bearing exercise needs to be regular and fairly vigorous.

Weight bearing exercise is any activity that you do while on your feet. During this type of exercise, bone adapts to the impact of the weight and pull of muscles by building more bone cells. Examples are brisk walking, stair climbing, bowls, golf and dancing.

A variety is better as it loads the bone in different ways. Short intense bursts of exercise are better than a leisurely walk.

## Osteoporosis medicines

As well as diet and lifestyle changes, your doctor may recommend certain medicines which can slow bone loss and significantly reduce the risk of fractures.

These can be administered in different ways. Some are given in tablet form (eg Fosamax, Actonel, Evista) while others are given via an injection or an infusion (eg Aclasta). They work in different ways to slow the “breakdown” process of bone and some may aid in the “build up” process.



# MEDICINES

All medicines have possible side effects. Some medicines, whether prescribed or bought over the counter, can have side effects that increase your risk of falling.

The medicines most likely to have these side effects are used to treat:

- anxiety
- depression
- blood pressure
- pain
- sleeping difficulties.

If you are having sleeping difficulty you can improve your chances of a good night's sleep by:

- Getting into a good relaxing bedtime routine
- Going to bed at about the same time each night
- Waking up at about the same time each day
- Exercising daily
- Restricting alcohol, caffeine and smoking, which are all stimulants.

## Common side effects of medication

- drowsiness
- dizziness
- light-headedness
- unsteadiness
- blurred or double vision
- difficulty thinking clearly.

Side effects may also occur when medicines are combined. If you notice any of these symptoms, talk to your GP or pharmacist as soon as possible.





Alcohol can also interact with your medicines and cause unwanted side effects. If you take anti-coagulant medicines (blood thinners), always seek medical attention immediately if you have a fall, as you may be at risk of severe injury and bleeding.

## Managing your medicines

It is important for you to take an active role in managing your regular medicines. Talk to your GP or pharmacist about your medicines. Keep a current list of your medicines and be aware of why you are taking them.

Remember:

- Only use your own medicines. Never use someone else's, even if they have the same condition
- Take your regular medicine at the same time every day
- Avoid sleeping tablets if possible.

If you take four or more medicines a day, ask your doctor to review your medicines list at least every six months. If you take less than four, once a year is enough. You should inform your doctor of any other medicines you are taking including any herbal supplements or non-prescription medicines.

There are two types of medicine review services in the ACT:

- Medscheck is completed by your community pharmacist, no referral required.
- Home Medicines Review is a more comprehensive service provided by your GP and community pharmacist. This is for people who take a large number of medicines or who have a number of medical conditions.

For more information talk to your GP or your pharmacist who can advise which type of review would be more appropriate.



**For more information see services listed on pages 26–32**

# FOOT CARE AND FOOTWEAR

Healthy feet and well-fitting footwear are essential to staying mobile and on your feet.

As you get older, your feet may change in size and shape. Foot pain and swelling can make it difficult to walk and may affect your balance.

Common foot problems include:

- bunions, corns and calluses
- ulcers
- ingrown toenails
- collapsed arches and
- stiffness in foot joints.

See your GP or Podiatrist for a full assessment of any potential problems. This is especially important if you have diabetes and notice a lack of feeling in your feet. The Podiatrist will advise on your optimum foot care regime and give information on maintaining good circulation, strength and movement in your feet.

Examine your feet on a daily basis, keep nails trimmed and moisturise the skin.

## Footwear

Unsafe or ill-fitting footwear can increase your risk of slips and trips e.g. thongs, worn-out shoes and soft slippers. It is not advised to go without footwear; it is very easy to slip in bare feet or when just wearing socks!

Safe footwear has the following features:



## Who can help?

ACT health provides a podiatry service for residents of the ACT who meet certain eligibility criteria.

Alternatively, look for private podiatrists in your area in the Yellow Pages.

Medicare Rebates for Individual Allied Health Services may be available for patients with a chronic medical condition. Discuss this with your GP.



**For more information see services listed on pages 26–32**

# VISION

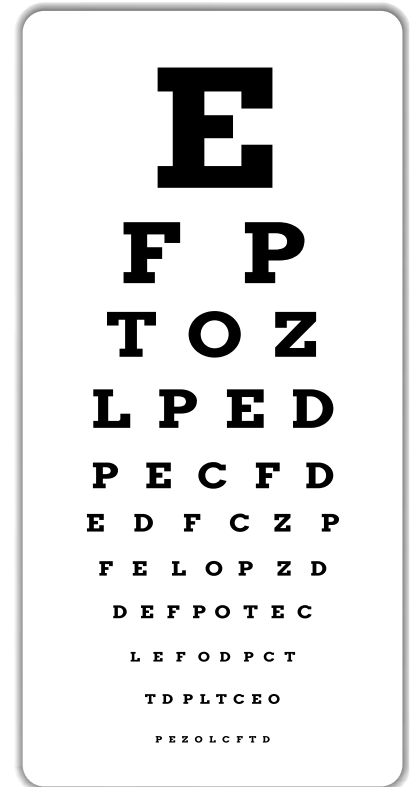
Good eyesight is required to see obstacles clearly and judge steps. It also helps to keep your balance.

By the age of 65, you will need three times more light to see as well as you did at the age of 20.

As you age, the eyes:

- take longer to adjust to sudden changes in light and dark
- are more sensitive to glare
- are less able to judge distance and depth, for example on steps
- can be more susceptible to watering or dryness.

Eye conditions such as macular degeneration, glaucoma, cataracts and diabetic retinopathy all impair vision. Have your eyesight and glasses checked by an optometrist at least every 2 years and by your GP in the years in between. If you are over 70, it is advisable to have a review by an optometrist annually. However, if you notice changes earlier than the recommended time, make an appointment with your doctor or optometrist for a checkup. It is important to detect any problems early so they can be treated promptly.



## When wearing glasses

Wear the correct glasses as prescribed by the optometrist i.e. reading glasses for reading and distance glasses for walking. Ensure that they are kept clean.

When wearing bifocal, multifocal or trifocal glasses it can be difficult to judge distances and see objects clearly on the ground. Consider having a separate pair of distance glasses for outdoor activity such as walking and gardening. Otherwise, take extra care on steps and uneven surfaces as looking through the lower portion of the lens can cause distortion.

## Tips to reduce falls

- Wear sun glasses and a hat outside to reduce glare
- Allow time for your eyes to adjust when moving from light to dark areas
- Never step blindly into the dark or where you can not see adequately
- Check that your home has good lighting both inside and out
- If you get up at night, make sure there is adequate light and have your glasses within easy reach.

## Who can help?

Optometrists: look in the Yellow Pages for one in your area.

Vision Australia, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT and the Canberra Blind Society are able to provide assistance if you or someone you care for has impaired vision.



**For more information see services listed on pages 26–32**

# HEALTHY EATING

A balanced diet is crucial to provide your body with the energy and nutrients to maintain good health and have strong bones and muscles. Poor nutrition and skipping meals can cause you to feel weak, dizzy, light-headed and reduce your ability to concentrate.

## What can you do to eat well?

Eat a wide range of food from the five food groups including fruit, vegetables, protein (meat, fish, poultry, eggs, nuts and legumes), dairy (milk, yoghurt and cheese) and grains (bread, cereals, rice and pasta). It is best to limit fatty or highly processed foods.

Drink plenty of fluids. A lack of water leads to dehydration which can cause weakness and dizziness. Keep alcohol consumption to a minimum as this can slow your reactions, judgement and coordination and make you unsteady.

Protein helps you to maintain strong muscles. This is important in helping you take part in regular physical activity.

As you age your bones are susceptible to becoming fragile. For bones to stay strong, they need Calcium and Vitamin D.

## Calcium

Calcium is stored in your bones and is also used in many different parts of the body, such as muscles and nerves. If calcium supplies are low, it is taken from your bones to the other parts of your body where it is needed.

Calcium requirements are greater as you get older because your body absorbs less from food. People, who smoke, consume a lot of caffeine, soft drinks, or meat obtain even less calcium from their diet.

Food sources high in calcium include: milk or soy milk, cheese, yoghurt, bony fish such as sardines and salmon, tahini, almonds and Brazil nuts. Other foods such as bread, cereals, fruit and green vegetables have calcium but in small amounts.

If you are unable to get enough calcium in your diet, your GP may recommend calcium supplements.

## Vitamin D

Vitamin D is necessary for bone health as it improves the absorption of calcium from the intestine. It also helps control calcium levels and maintains muscle strength.

Vitamin D is obtained in two ways – mostly from sun exposure, and to a lesser degree from your diet in milk, oily fish (e.g. salmon, mackerel), and eggs.



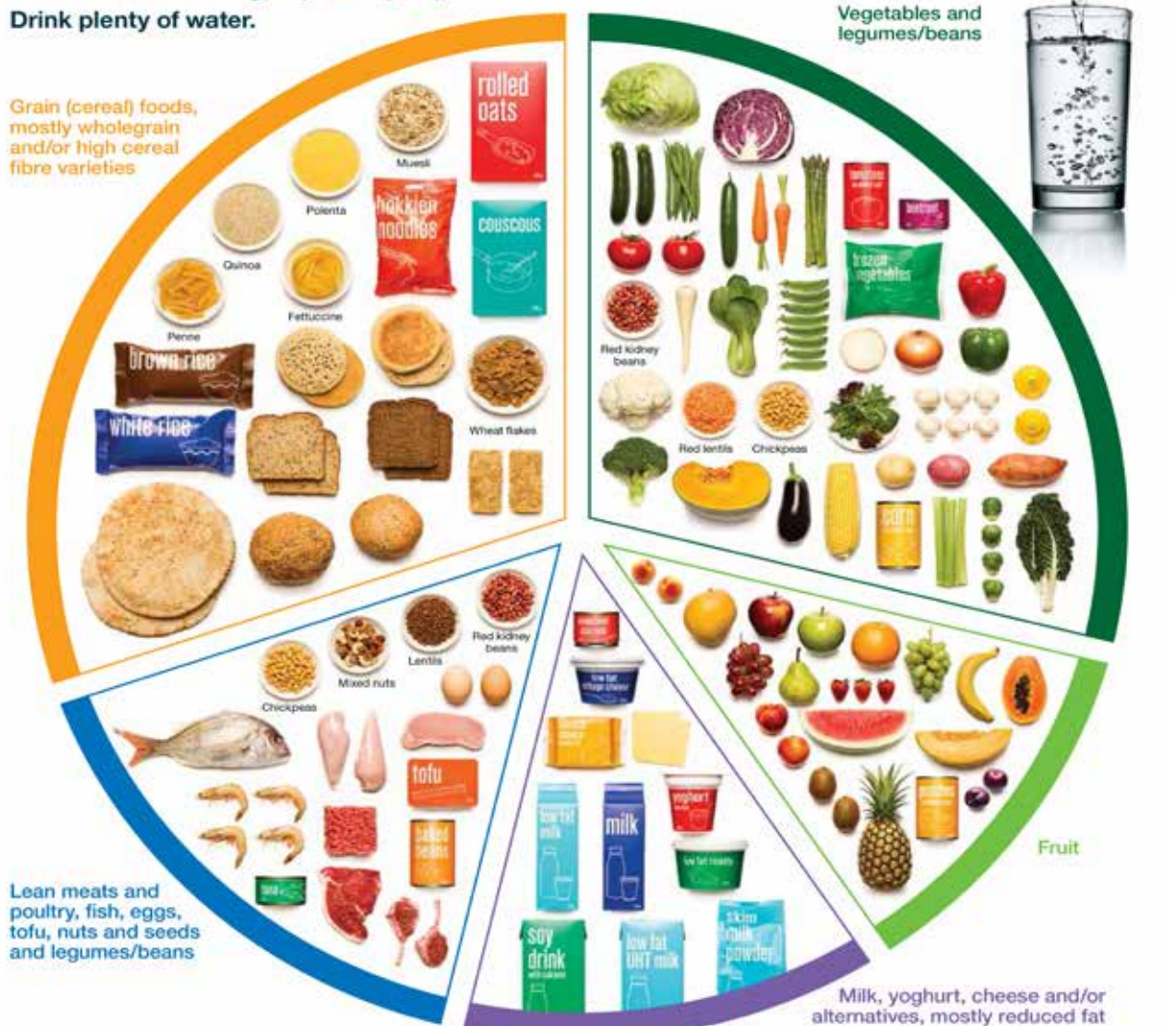
When your skin is exposed to the sun's ultraviolet B rays, Vitamin D is produced. Despite needing only a small amount of exposure to produce an adequate amount of Vitamin D, many Australians have low levels. Vitamin D levels can be checked by your GP with a simple blood test.

During summer expose your arms daily in the sun for 5–10 minutes (fair skin) or 20–50 minutes (darker skin). Mid-morning or mid-afternoon is best as the sun is not so hot.

The exposure time changes with winter where you need between 7–30 minutes (fair skin) or 45 – 90 minutes (darker skin) each day to achieve the same results. These times are specific for the ACT region.

Vitamin D deficiency can lead to bone and joint pain and muscle weakness. If you are Vitamin D deficient, your GP may prescribe a supplement to maintain appropriate levels.

**Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods from these five food groups every day. Drink plenty of water.**



# HOME SAFETY

## IDENTIFY AND REMOVE HAZARDS IN THE HOME

Identifying and removing environmental hazards within the home and garden is a simple way to enable you to further minimise your risk of falling. Use the checklist below to help identify hazards in your home. If you answer “no” to any item, consider how you could make the area safer. An Occupational Therapist may be able to advise you. For a referral to an Occupational Therapist contact My Aged Care, for information see page 33.

You may be eligible for assistance with home modifications from an ACT Community Service. For further information contact My Aged Care (see page 34)

Room or Area	Yes	No	N/A
<b>Entrances and Hallways</b>			
Doorbell is easy to hear from other rooms			
Doors (internal and external) are easy to operate and pass through			
<b>Flooring</b>			
Floor surfaces are slip-resistant			
Floor surfaces are even and in good repair			
Any mats are secured, visible and lying flat without wrinkles or curled edges			
<b>Stairs and Steps</b>			
Sturdy handrail is available			
Edges are clearly visible			
Steps are easy to go up/down			
Step stool (if used) is sturdy, low height, has large footplates and has a handrail			
<b>Lighting</b>			
Light switch is easy to reach at each doorway or hallway			
All rooms are well lit			
Light switch or bedside light is within easy reach from the bed			
Outside paths and entrances are well lit at night			
Stairs have a light switch at the top and bottom			
<b>Windows</b>			
Windows and drapes are easy to open without climbing over the furniture			
Glare-reducing curtains/coverings			
<b>Kitchen</b>			
Regularly used items are within easy reach			

Room or Area	Yes	No	N/A
Well ventilated (to reduce chance of glasses fogging)			
<b>Living/Dining</b>			
Furniture is easy to walk around			
No cords or obstructions are across walkways			
Chairs are easy to get in/out from			
<b>Telephone or Mobile phone</b>			
Is within easy reach from floor level			
Pre-programmed numbers for emergencies			
Cordless phone is available to take outside			
Answer machine/home messages is available			
Handset on each level (in multi-level home)			
Phone is available in the bedroom			
<b>Bedroom</b>			
Bed is easy to get in/out from			
Bed coverings are clear of floor			
No cords or obstructions are around bed or in walkways			
Walking aid can be kept within reach, without obstructing			
<b>Bathroom and Toilet</b>			
Mats are slip resistant, lie flat and are visible			
Shower and/or bath is easy to step in/out of without holding onto the taps, soap dish or screen			
Soap and shampoo is within easy reach without bending			
Toilet is easy to get on/off without holding onto door or toilet-roll holder			
Sufficient space in the toilet to open the door easily			
Handrail is in the shower or beside the bath			
Handrail is beside the toilet			
<b>Outside the Home</b>			
All paths and steps are in good repair and not overgrown			
Handrail is on the steps and not overgrown			
Step edges are clearly marked			
Clothesline, mailbox, bins and fuse-box are easy to reach			
Defined path to the clothesline, mailbox, bins and fuse-box			
Garden is free of trip hazards			
Garage/shed is uncluttered and free of oil and grease			
Public footpath is in good repair			

# HOME SAFETY [CONTINUED]

## Preparation is key

Some things to consider if you have a fall:

- Can you get up from the floor without assistance under normal circumstances?
- Do you have a telephone you can reach from the floor?
- Do you have a cordless telephone or mobile that you can take into the garden?
- Are you able to carry the telephone and still have your hands free? Can you carry a telephone in a secure pocket, a bum bag, or walker basket?
- If you are unable to get up or reach the telephone:
  - Do you have another method of attracting attention?
  - Would someone notice if you were not up and around?
  - Would they notice promptly?
- Do you have a key safe or does someone you trust have spare keys to be able to access your home?

**If you have answered “no” to any of these questions, can the situation be altered so that you can answer “yes?”**

If you still answer “no” to any of these questions; have you considered a personal alarm system or setting up a daily telephone check with a family member, neighbour or the Red Cross Telecross service?

**For more information contact the Independent Living Centre,  
details on page 29**



## Using a Ladder?

Approximately 19 Australians die each year after falling from a ladder. Thousands more have been seriously injured. You don't have to fall far to hurt yourself. Men at or near retirement age are at the greatest risk.

Before you climb a ladder consider:

- Does your medication or health condition (s) have an effect on your balance or concentration?
- Is the ladder in good condition and appropriate for the task?

## When on a ladder

- Always wear well fitting, enclosed, slip resistant footwear.
- Ensure the ladder is set up on dry, firm and level ground, and clear of any obstacles such as power lines.
- Don't take risks. Work within arm's reach and never lean too far.
- Only ever climb as far as the second step from the top.
- Have someone hold the ladder at the base.



**Consider asking family, friends, neighbours or a community service to complete the tasks in the home that require a ladder.**

# HOME SAFETY [CONTINUED]

**Unsafe**



**Safer**



Avoid having clutter on the floor that could be a trip hazard

**Unsafe**



**Safer**



Avoid uneven surfaces or paths when walking

**Unsafe**



**Safer**



Maintain clear stairways and always use the handrail



**Unsafe**



**Safer**



Keep shower areas clear and use a shower stool or chair if needed

**Unsafe**



**Safer**



Ensure there is good lighting in areas where falls are likely

# HOME SAFETY [CONTINUED]

## How can I get up off the floor at home?

### Forward Lift Method



**1** Turn onto your back



**2** Roll onto your side



**3** Push onto your hands



**4** Push onto your hands and knees



**5** Kneel, using stable furniture to steady yourself



**6** Place your stronger leg forward



**7** Stand up



**8** Turn slowly



**9** Sit down. Rest. Tell somebody you have fallen

Reproduced with the permission of Stay On Your Feet WA – Up off the floor poster – forward lift method

WA Falls Prevention Network, WA Department of Health (2012)

# How can I get up off the floor at home?

## Backward Lift Method



**1** Turn onto your back



**2** Roll onto your side



**3** Push onto your hands



**4** Prop with both arms behind



**5** Use cushion as a low seat\*  
(\*a stool or low box can be used)



**6** Lift bottom back onto cushion



**7** Push as far back as possible



**8** Lift bottom back onto chair



**9** Sit down. Rest. Tell somebody you have fallen

Reproduced with the permission of Stay On Your Feet WA – Up off the floor poster – forward lift method

WA Falls Prevention Network, WA Department of Health (2012)

# ACT CONTACTS

## ACAT – Aged Care Assessment Team

Referrals via My Aged Care.

Phone: 1800 200 422 or

[www.myagedcare.gov.au](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au)

## ACT Equipment Services

Access to Equipment Loan Service, with referral from an appropriate Health Professional.

For further information or referral contact Community Health Intake see details above

Phone: 6207 9977

## ACT Health Community Health Intake

Central Referral and Intake Services for all community ACT Health Services.

Phone: 6207 9977

Referral form:

[www.health.act.gov.au/  
communityhealth](http://www.health.act.gov.au/communityhealth)

## ACT Deafness Resource Centre

Information, referral and advocacy services.

Grant Cameron Community Centre

L1B 27 Mulley Street,  
Weston ACT 2611

Phone: 6287 4393

Email: [enquiries@actdrc.org.au](mailto:enquiries@actdrc.org.au)

[www.actdrc.org.au](http://www.actdrc.org.au)

## ACT Health Continence Service

Assessment and management of continence and pelvic health issues.

Phone: 6207 9977

## ACT Health Falls and Falls Injury Prevention Program

Referrals are via the Community Health Intake.

Phone: 6207 9977

For information

only contact: 6205 5161

### **ACT Health Geriatrician and Memory Clinic**

Medical Specialist assessment of the older person.

GP referrals required via Community Health Intake

### **Arthritis ACT (Including Osteoporosis ACT)**

Aims to improve quality of life for those with musculoskeletal conditions.

Level 2B, Grant Cameron Community Centre, 27 Mulley St, Holder ACT 2611

Phone: 6288 4244

Email: [info@arthritisact.org.au](mailto:info@arthritisact.org.au)

[www.arthritisact.org.au](http://www.arthritisact.org.au)

### **Canberra Blind Society**

Delivers a range of services to the vision impaired.

Griffin Centre, 20 Genge Street  
Canberra ACT 2601

Phone: 6247 4580

Email: [canblind@tpg.com.au](mailto:canblind@tpg.com.au)

[www.canberrablindsociety.org.au](http://www.canberrablindsociety.org.au)

### **Alzheimer's Australia**

Represents the interests of those affected by dementia.

159 Maribyrnong Avenue,  
Kaleen ACT 2617

Phone: 6255 0722

Email: [ACT.Admin@alzheimers.org.au](mailto:ACT.Admin@alzheimers.org.au)

### **Belconnen Community Services ACT**

Regional community service in the Belconnen region.

26 Chandler Street, Belconnen 2616  
Postal: PO Box, Belconnen ACT 2616

Phone: 6264 0200

[www.bcsact.gov.au](http://www.bcsact.gov.au)

### **CANwalk**

Portal for information on walking groups and events.

[www.canwalk.org.au](http://www.canwalk.org.au)



# ACT CONTACTS [CONTINUED]

## Carers ACT

Supporting carers in the community.

2/80 Beaurepaire Crescent,  
Holt ACT 2615

Phone: 6296 9900

Email: [carers@carersact.org.au](mailto:carers@carersact.org.au)

[www.carersact.org.au](http://www.carersact.org.au)

## Community Options ACT

More than 25 years of experience in  
providing services to older people.

115 Canberra Avenue,  
Griffith ACT 2603

Phone: 6295 8800

Email: [admin@communityoptions.com.au](mailto:admin@communityoptions.com.au)

## Commonwealth Respite Centre – ACT

Phone: 1800 059 059

## Clinical Psychologist

Referrals via Community Health  
Intake

Alternatively, look for private  
psychologists in your area in the  
Yellow Pages or discuss with your GP.

## Community Transport Services

This is the central contact for north  
and south side community transport.

PO Box 1066, Tuggeranong ACT 2901

Phone: 6126 9090

## Diabetes ACT

Support and services to people  
at risk and living with all types of  
diabetes.

Grant Cameron Community Centre,  
27 Mulley St, Holder ACT 2611

Phone: 6288 9830

Email: [diab@diabetes-act.com.au](mailto:diab@diabetes-act.com.au)



<b>DUO Services (formerly Home Help)</b>	<b>Gungahlin Community Services</b>
<p>Provides personal home and community support services.</p> <p>The Blaxland Centre. 25 Blaxland Crescent, Griffith ACT 2603</p> <p>Phone: 6287 2870 Email: <a href="mailto:support@duo.org.au">support@duo.org.au</a> <a href="http://www.duo.org.au">www.duo.org.au</a></p>	<p>Regional community service in the Gungahlin region.</p> <p>47 Ernest Cavanagh Street, Gungahlin ACT 2912</p> <p>Phone: 6228 9200</p>
<b>Guide Dogs ACT</b>	<b>Heart Foundation ACT</b>
<p>Promotes the independence and mobility of people who are blind or vision impaired.</p> <p>18 Napier Close, Deakin ACT 2600</p> <p>Phone: 6285 2988</p>	<p>Making a difference to Australia's heart health.</p> <p>Unit 1, Level1, 17–23 Townsend Street, Phillip ACT 2606</p> <p>Phone: 6282 5744 <a href="http://www.heartfoundation.org.au">www.heartfoundation.org.au</a></p>
<b>Heartmoves</b>	<b>Independent Living Centre ACT</b>
<p>Run by the Heart Foundation ACT. Provides a gentle physical activity program suitable for anyone.</p> <p>Phone: 1300 36 27 87 <a href="http://www.heartfoundation.org.au">www.heartfoundation.org.au</a></p>	<p>Information resource centre with a large range of assistive equipment on display.</p> <p>24 Parkinson Street, Weston ACT 2611</p> <p>Phone: 6205 1900 Email: <a href="mailto:ilcact@act.gov.au">ilcact@act.gov.au</a> <a href="http://www.health.act.gov.au/ilc">www.health.act.gov.au/ilc</a></p>

# ACT CONTACTS [CONTINUED]

## LifeLine ACT

Telephone Crisis Support to the people of Canberra and the surrounding region.

GPO Box 583, Canberra City  
ACT 2601

Phone: 13 11 14  
[www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)

## Northside Community Services

Regional community service in the northside region.

2 Rosevear Place, Dickson ACT 2602

Phone: 6257 2255  
Email: [reception@northside.asn.au](mailto:reception@northside.asn.au)  
[www.northside.asn.au](http://www.northside.asn.au)

## Positive Links – Stroke Support Group

Belconnen Community Centre  
26 Chandler Street, Belconnen  
ACT 2616

Phone: 6264 0200  
Email: [respite@belcomserv.com.au](mailto:respite@belcomserv.com.au)

## MS Society ACT

National voice for people with multiple sclerosis.

Gloria McKerrow House,  
117 Dennison Street, Deakin ACT  
2600

Open: Monday to Friday  
Phone: 6234 7000  
Email: [info@msaustralia.org.au](mailto:info@msaustralia.org.au)  
[www.msaustralia.org.au](http://www.msaustralia.org.au)

## Parkinson's ACT/SHOUT

Support group for people with Parkinson's Disease.

Pearce Community Centre,  
Collett Pl, Pearce ACT 2607

Phone: 6290 1984  
Email: [parkinsons@shout.org.au](mailto:parkinsons@shout.org.au)  
[www.parkinsonsact.org.au](http://www.parkinsonsact.org.au)

## Red Cross Meals on Wheels

Supports the individual to maintain independence in their own home.

Red Cross House, 3 Dann Close,  
Garran ACT 2605

Phone: 6234 7634  
Open: 9am–430pm  
Email: [actinfo@redcross.org.au](mailto:actinfo@redcross.org.au)  
[www.redcross.org.au](http://www.redcross.org.au)

### **Red Cross Telecross**

Provides a daily call to check on well being and safety.  
Phone: 1300 885 698

### **Stepping On**

A Falls Prevention Program for over 70s living in the community.  
To register or find out more call:  
6205 5161

### **Vision Australia – Canberra**

A leading national provider of blindness and low vision services.  
2nd Floor, 22 East Row, Canberra  
ACT 2601  
Phone: 6132 5800  
Email: [info@visionaustralia.org](mailto:info@visionaustralia.org)  
[www.visionaustralia.org](http://www.visionaustralia.org)

### **YMCA Health and Fitness**

Provides exercise programs for all ages and fitness levels.  
Phone: 6281 0214  
Email: [yfitness.can@ymca.org.au](mailto:yfitness.can@ymca.org.au)  
[www.canberra.ymca.org.au](http://www.canberra.ymca.org.au)

### **Southside Community Services**

Regional community service in the Southside region.  
63 Boolimba Crescent,  
Narrabundah 2604  
Phone: 6126 4700  
Email: [admin@sscs.org.au](mailto:admin@sscs.org.au)  
[www.sscs.org.au](http://www.sscs.org.au)

### **Tuggeranong Communities @ Work**

Tuggeranong Community Centre, 245  
Cowlshaw Street, Greenway 2900  
Phone: 6293 6500  
Email: [admin@commsatwork.org](mailto:admin@commsatwork.org)

### **Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service**

63 Boolimba Crescent, Narrabundah  
ACT 2604  
Phone: 6284 6222  
Free Call: 1800 110 290 or  
1800 120 859  
[www.winnunga.org.au](http://www.winnunga.org.au)

# NATIONAL CONTACTS

## Australian Dietary Guidelines

[www.eatforhealth.gov.au](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au)

## Better Hearing Australia

5 High Street, Prahran VIC 3181

Phone: 1300 242 842 or  
03 9510 1577

## Beyond Blue

Phone: 1300 224 636

Web: [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)

## Commonwealth Home And Community Care (HACC) Program

Phone: 1800 200 422

## Continence Foundation of Australia

Phone: 1800 330 066

Web: [www.continence.org.au](http://www.continence.org.au)

## Department of Veterans Affairs

Phone: 13 32 54 or 1800 555 254

Web: [www.dva.gov.au](http://www.dva.gov.au)

## Lifeline National Office

PO Box 173, Deakin West ACT 2600

24hr crisis line: 13 11 14

Phone: 6215 9400

## Macular Degeneration Foundation

Help line: 1800 111 709 free call

Phone: 02 9261 8900

Email: [info@mdfoundation.com.au](mailto:info@mdfoundation.com.au)  
[www.mdfoundation.com.au](http://www.mdfoundation.com.au)

## National Stroke Foundation

Free Call: 1800 787 653

Ph: 03 9670 1000

Fax: 03 9670 9300

[www.strokefoundation.com.au](http://www.strokefoundation.com.au)

## Osteoporosis Australia

Phone: 1800 242 141 toll free

Web: [www.osteoporosis.org.au](http://www.osteoporosis.org.au)

# ACT EMERGENCY SERVICES CONTACT LIST AND USEFUL WEBSITES

## ACT Emergency Services Contact List

### ACT Ambulance

In case of an emergency call 000.

### ACT Poisons Information Centre

24 hour Telephone Advice Line  
Phone: 13 11 26.

### ACT Policing

Phone: 131 444 (non-urgent issues). In case of an emergency call 000.

My GP: \_\_\_\_\_

My Chemist: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## Useful websites

### ACT Health

[www.health.act.gov.au](http://www.health.act.gov.au)

Information about public health services in the ACT.

### Active and Healthy (NSW Government)

[www.activeandhealthy.nsw.gov.au](http://www.activeandhealthy.nsw.gov.au)

Information on falls and falls injury prevention strategies.

### Community Services Directorate

[www.communityservices.act.gov.au](http://www.communityservices.act.gov.au)

Information about a wide range of human services functions in the ACT.

### My Aged Care Information Line

[www.myagedcare.gov.au](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au)

Information on aged care and related services.



# MY AGED CARE

An Australian Government service to help find information about and make referrals for aged care services, including personal and domestic care, after hospital care, respite, transport, home modifications, allied health services and residential aged care.

## **For more information:**

[www.myagedcare.gov.au](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au) or call My Aged Care on 1800 200 422.

Open Monday to Friday: 8am to 8pm, Saturday: 10am to 2 pm.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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*What you need to know about Osteoporosis – Consumer guide.* (2012)  
Osteoporosis Australia.

*How to stay on your feet – Checklist.* (May 2008) QLD Department of Health.

*Staying active and on your feet.* (2010) NSW Department of Health.

*Don't Fall for it.* (2011) Commonwealth of Australia.

*Stay On Your Feet WA – Higher need booklet.* (2012) WA Falls Prevention Network, WA Department of Health.

*Stay On Your Feet WA – Up off the floor poster – forward lift method.* (2012)  
WA Falls Prevention Health Network, WA Department of Health.

*Stay On Your Feet WA – Up off the floor poster – backwards lift method.* (2012) WA  
Falls Prevention Health network, WA Department of Health.

AIHW National Injury Surveillance Unit.

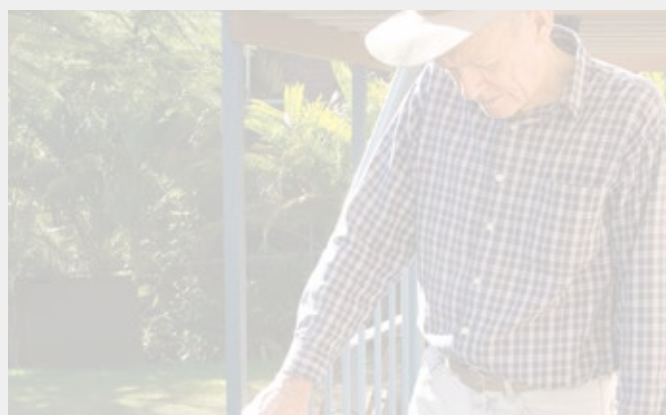
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

ACT Chief Health Officer's report 2014.

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*Be proactive – keep mobile, confident and independent for the future.*

