

# No Falls November

## Move it Monday

Physical activity improves your overall strength, balance and wellbeing – helping you stay independent.

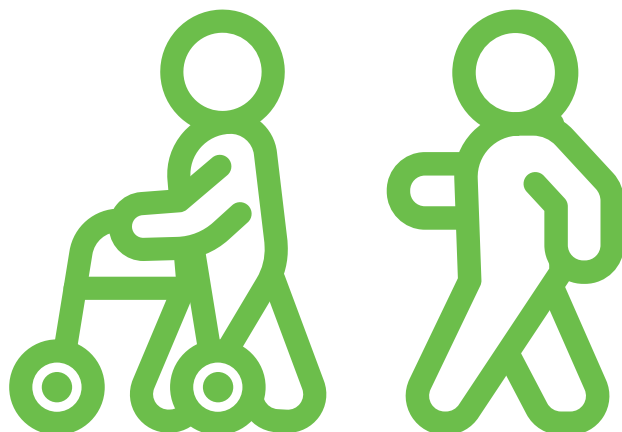
### Get moving by...

- asking your health professional for advice before you get started
- starting small and building up over time
- doing what you can, without overstretching yourself.

### Why not try...

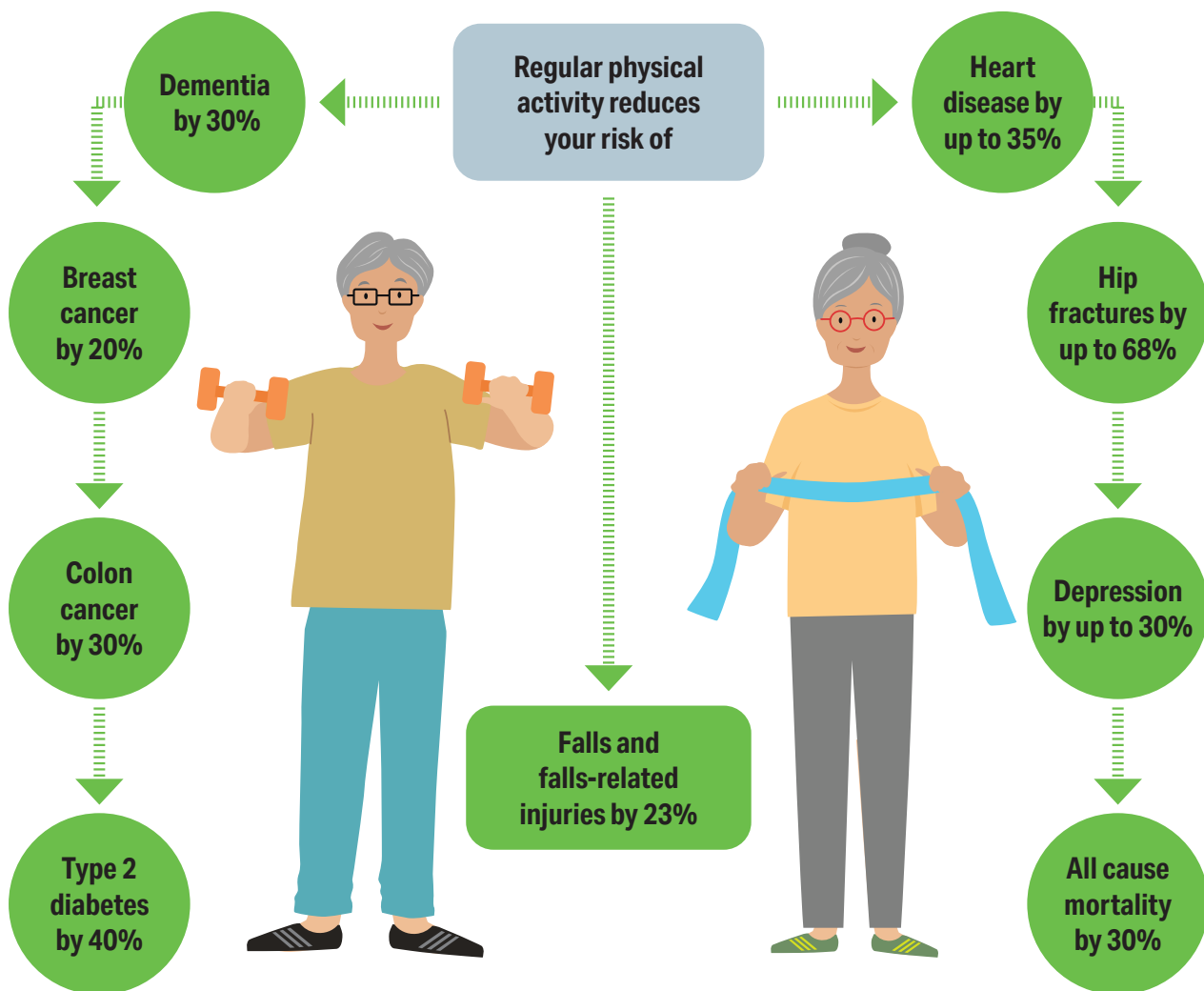
- taking a walk
- playing with grandchildren
- chair exercises – supportive and easy on the joints
- hydrotherapy – low-impact, full-body and good for the heart
- tai chi – for balance, mindfulness and relaxation
- gentle stretching or yoga – for balance and flexibility
- strength-building programs – for your muscles.

**Remember – any physical activity, even while sitting in a chair, is better than none!**



Aim for 30 minutes of physical activity a day – this can include any form of movement, be it socialising, walking or recreational activities.

## The benefits



[healthywa.wa.gov.au](http://healthywa.wa.gov.au)



[stayonyourfeet.com.au](http://stayonyourfeet.com.au)

For more information or enquiries, contact [healthpolicy@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:healthpolicy@health.wa.gov.au)

# No Falls November

## Teach back Tuesday

Let's get educated  
on falls and falls  
prevention!

### In WA, it matters because

- someone is admitted to hospital due to a fall-related injury every 15 minutes
- almost one in 5 hospitalisations of people aged 85 years or over are due to falls
- over half of all fall-related hospitalisations are due to falls in homes or aged care homes.

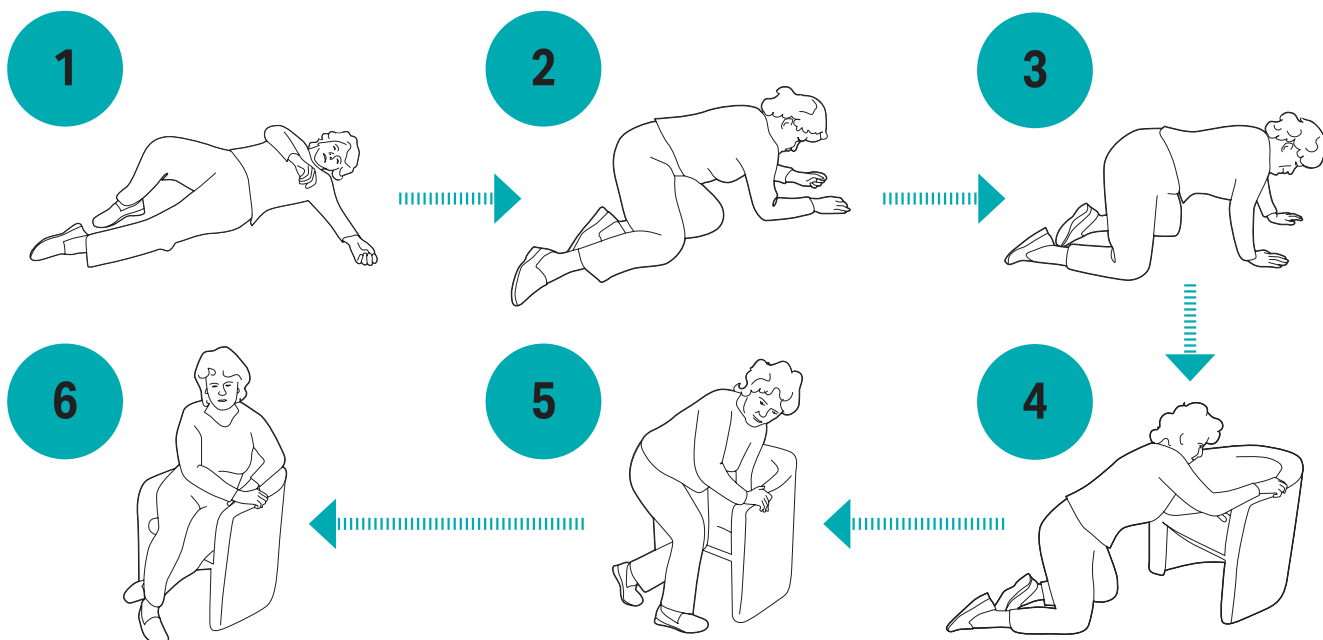
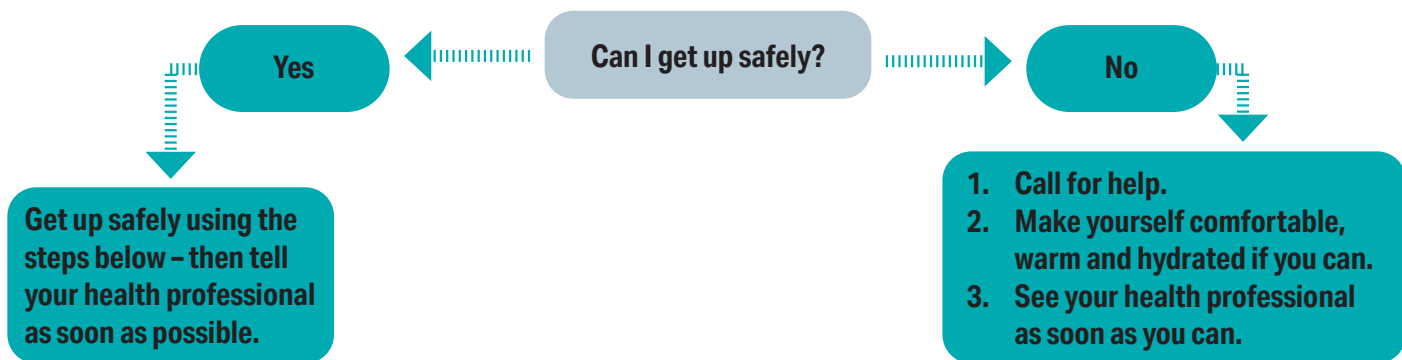
### Reduce your risk

- talk to your health professional
- complete the Stay On Your Feet<sup>®</sup> checklist to know your risk of falling
- move your body and keep active
- improve your physical and mental health
- remove trip hazards from your room
- wear appropriate shoes
- use assistive technology
- teach someone else about falls prevention.



Knowing what to do if you fall is important. Talk to your health professional and make a plan that is best for you.

## If you fall



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# No Falls November

## Wobbly Wednesday

Postural (orthostatic) hypotension is when your blood pressure drops after you change position, such as when you move from lying to sitting, or sitting to standing.

### Symptoms

- feeling dizzy or lightheaded, especially when moving from lying or sitting to standing
- feeling faint or fainting
- blurry or tunnel vision
- feeling nauseated, hot or clammy
- feeling weak and shaky in the legs.

### Causes

- when you stand or sit up suddenly
- in the morning when your blood pressure is naturally lower
- after a large meal or alcohol
- during exercise
- when you strain on the toilet
- when you're unwell.

### Are you at risk?

Some risk factors include:

- high blood pressure
- some medical conditions such as diabetes and heart failure
- some medications such as diuretics, antidepressants and medicines to lower blood pressure
- neurological conditions such as Parkinson's disease and dementia
- dehydration
- anaemia
- excessive alcohol consumption
- prolonged bed rest or inactivity.



# What can you do?

- Speak to your health professional about any symptoms or concerns you have.
- Discuss the risks and side-effects of your medicines with them.
- Exercise gently before getting up from a chair or bed:
  - move your feet up and down and clench and unclench your hands.
  - get out of bed slowly – sit on the side of the bed first.
  - count to 10 slowly, then stand.
- Stand slowly when rising from a chair:
  - make sure you have something to hold on to
  - wait for a moment before walking.
- Sit down immediately if you feel dizzy.



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# No Falls November

## Tinkle Thursday

Urinary incontinence is a risk factor for falls.

### Did you know?

One in 14 Australians over the age of 65 and one in 4 over the age of 85 experience severe incontinence – either bowel, urinary or both.

### What does it mean?

Urinary incontinence and continence problems may include:

- stress incontinence
- urge incontinence
- nocturia (more frequent urination at night)
- overflow incontinence
- function incontinence
- prolapse.

Bowel problems have many causes and may result in:

- faecal incontinence
- constipation
- diarrhoea.



# How to stay healthy

- Talk to your health professional.
- Reduce how much caffeine and alcohol you drink – these can upset the bladder.
- Eat plenty of vegetables and fruits to prevent constipation – straining can weaken your pelvic floor muscles.
- Rest with your legs up for an hour in the afternoon or evening.
- Have the path to the toilet well-lit at night and free of clutter, so you don't trip.
- Consider using a urinal or commode by the bed at night.
- Know where the toilets are, and don't rush.



## Find out more

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



[healthywa.wa.gov.au](http://healthywa.wa.gov.au)



[stayonyourfeet.com.au](http://stayonyourfeet.com.au)





# No Falls November

## Forget Me Not Friday

Cognitive impairment means difficulties in one or more areas of cognition, including memory, thinking, orientation, comprehension, calculation, learning capacity, language and judgement.

### Symptoms

- trouble making good decisions
- memory loss affecting daily activities
- problems with abstract thinking
- problems with language (e.g. forgetting words or word replacement)
- loss of initiative or starting things
- changes in personality
- disorientation to time and place
- changes in mood or behaviour.

### Are you at risk?

Some risk factors include:

- being aged 65 or over
- severe illness
- recent surgery
- history of delirium, dementia or depression
- hearing or visual impairment
- alcohol or sedative use
- taking several medications.



# Know the causes

- being in unfamiliar surroundings
- during or after an infection
- experiencing severe pain
- not drinking enough fluids (dehydration) or getting adequate nutrition
- constipation or urine retention
- taking certain medications, including 'over the counter' medications
- withdrawal from medication, alcohol or other substances.

## What can you do?

- tell your health professional if you experience any changes to your thinking or memory
- if you have a pre-existing condition, such as dementia, sharing your daily routine with others can improve comfort and assist in reducing distress

## Family and carers – things to bring

- well fitting, non-slip shoes or slippers
- any usual glasses or hearing aids (and spare batteries)
- any usual walking aids, as requested
- nightwear that's above ankle length
- personal items (e.g. photographs, personal clothing).



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