



Remove Hazards

Information and Tips to Help Keep You Safe
and Prevent Falls

The City of Kalamunda is proud to partner with Injury Matters to bring to you this resource to illustrate the important Remove Hazards message as part of the Stay On Your Feet® Move Improve Remove program.

Remove Hazards is one part of the Move Improve Remove messaging used to encourage older adults to stay safe, independent, and prevent falls.

The Remove Hazards campaign aims to educate older adults on the importance of creating safe environments, as well as looking after your eyesight and feet to prevent falls and promote healthy ageing.

For more information about the campaign, refer to the attached booklet.



Injury Matters

Injury Matters aims to prevent and reduce the impact of injury within the Western Australian community.

Injury Matters works to have a positive impact on the community as a quality, sustainable organisation committed to creating safer people and places.

Injury Matters raises awareness of injury prevention and recovery by providing education, advocacy, and support for those affected by the impact of injury.

Injury Matters works across a range of current and emerging injury priority areas affecting the community. This includes falls, trauma recovery, community violence, substance-related harm, and safety promotion. Injury Matters influences, empowers, and collaborates with people, agencies, communities, and governments for positive injury outcomes.

Stay On Your Feet®

The Stay On Your Feet® program has been delivered by Injury Matters since 2001 and is funded by the WA Department of Health.

Stay On Your Feet® is WA's leading falls prevention program for older adults living in the community.

Stay On Your Feet® aims to prevent falls and falls-related injuries among older adults and promotes how to keep active and alert through the Move Improve Remove campaigns; Move Your Body, Improve Your Health, and Remove Hazards to stay active and alert to prevent slips, trips, and falls.

You should find the following documents along with this resource:

- ▶ Stay On Your Feet® Booklet
- ▶ Home Safety Checklist
- ▶ Shoe Safety Checklist
- ▶ How To Get Up Off The Floor - Using Your Arms
- ▶ How To Get Up Off The Floor - Using Your Legs

Why Falls Prevention?

Between 2012 and 2016, there were 2,194 hospitalisations of City of Kalamunda residents due to accidental falls.

Most hospitalisations due to accidental falls were for older adults, 65+ years (n=1,205). Between 2011 and 2015, 20 City of Kalamunda residents died due to accidental falls.

Reference: Data was generated in February 2018 from the WA Hospital Morbidity Data System (2012-2016) by the Epidemiology Branch, Department of Health WA. Fatality data was generated from WA Department of Health and the Cooperative Research Centre for Spatial Information's Health Tracks Reporting System by Injury Matters in January 2018.

Falls in Western Australia



Every 19 minutes someone was admitted to hospital due to a falls-related injury in 2018.



Individuals aged 85+ were most impacted by falls.

27,327
falls-related hospitalisations in 2018
(25,328 in 2017)



Every 12 minutes someone presented to the emergency department due to a falls-related injury in 2018.



42,384
falls-related emergency department presentations in 2018
(43,408 in 2017)



Every 26 hours someone died due to a falls-related injury in 2017.

Females experienced a higher rate of falls-related hospitalisations and emergency department attendances in 2018.



329
falls-related fatalities in 2017
(336 in 2016)

Remove Hazards

It's so important you remove hazards to reduce your risk of having a fall in and around your home.

Creating a safe environment means you will be able to:

- ▶ Move safely inside and outside the home.
- ▶ Stay independent in the home and community.
- ▶ Complete everyday activities, such as shopping and gardening.
- ▶ Play with the grandchildren.
- ▶ Keep doing the activities you enjoy.

The Remove Hazards message focuses on the following three modifiable risk factors for falls.

1 Make Your Home Safer

Slips, trips and falls can happen to anyone but as you get older the chance of it happening to you increases.

With around half of all falls happening in and around the home it is important to make your home safer so you can get on with enjoying the fun things in life. Use the enclosed Home Safety Checklist as a guide to make your home safer. This checklist will help you to find and make the changes you need to make your home safer, many of which will be simple and low cost.

To use the guide:



Answer all of the questions



Tick the checklist off as you go



Use the suggestions to make notes at the bottom of each page




Fill in the action plan

Making your home safer is a team effort.

Start by finding a friend or family member to go through this checklist with you, and return the favour by doing it in their home.

Many changes are simple and can be made by you, a friend or a family member. For changes you need extra help with speak to your GP for an Occupational Therapy referral, your care package provider or contact one of these organisations:

Indigo

 indigosolutions.org.au

 (08) 9381 0600

Independent Living Assessment

 ilaustralia.org.au

 (08) 6202 4700


Community Aids and Equipment
Program

 disability.wa.gov.au

 1800 998 214

My Aged Care

 myagedcare.gov.au

 1800 200 422

Western Australian Occupational Therapy Association

 waota.com.au

 (08) 9388 1490



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Check Your Eyesight

As we get older, our vision begins to change and deteriorate. Many of these changes are very gradual, so they are often ignored or unnoticed.

Our vision helps us to maintain our balance and identify hazards and obstacles in our environment that we can then navigate around.

It is important that we get our eyes tested every two years and we speak to our GP or Optometrist if we notice any changes in our eyesight (symptoms can include; clouded vision, sensitivity to light, difficulty with vision at night and dry or watery eyes). The main eye conditions associated with ageing include; Macular Degeneration, Diabetic Retinopathy, Glaucoma and Cataracts.

Better vision tips	Safety tips
Wear properly fitted glasses, as advised by an Optometrist.	Ensure good lighting in and around the home.
Make sure bifocals fit correctly.	Avoid patterned carpets and furniture.
Be aware of small changes to vision.	Place contrast strips on the edge of stairs, any changes in floor surfaces and on shelves to help see depth.
Have eyes checked every two years by a GP or Optometrist.	Clearly mark pillars, poles and other structures that may obscure walkways.
Take time to adjust to new lenses.	When moving into an area with different light (e.g. when going from inside to outside), stop and hold onto a steady object while your eyes adjust.
Clean glasses often.	Clearly mark glass doors at eye level and ensure door handles contrast with the door.
Allow eyes to adjust when moving to an area of different light.	Reduce glare by installing blinds or curtains and using matt surfaces for tables and other surfaces.

Who can help:

► **Lions Eye Institute**

🖥️ lei.org.au

► **Optometrists Association WA**

🖥️ optometrists.asn.au

► **Your Local Optometrist or Ophthalmologist (see back page).**

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Wear Safe Footwear

We need good shoes to support our feet. Our shoes are our direct source of contact with the ground, so the shoes we wear can affect our posture, stability, balance, safety and gait. If we are not well supported, how can we stand tall, walk or move around efficiently?

The main functions of shoes are to support our feet and protect them from extreme temperatures, moisture, hazards in the environment, injury, and to support us with daily activities. Shoes that do not fit well can cause discomfort, injury and permanent foot problems. Wearing shoes which hurt our feet can alter our walking and cause us to be off-balance.

We all grow older and as we do our feet change. Bone deformities such as bunions or arthritis, skin changes and difficulties undertaking basic foot care can lead to foot health issues and can increase our risk of having a fall.

Use the enclosed Shoe Safety Checklist to see if you need safer shoes.

Things to consider:

► **Heel height**

Studies have shown that high heels can make you less stable and unbalanced when walking. A safe heel should be broad, with a round shape and a height less than 2cm. The more surface area of the sole that is in contact with the ground, the more stable the shoe.

► **Mid-sole cushioning**

Foam material is used in the middle sole area of shoes to provide comfort. A good shoe will have cushioning, but not too much that the foot is not stable and can't feel the ground.

► **Textured sole**

The slip resistance of the outer sole of a shoe is important to prevent slipping. The amount of tread a shoe has can increase the likelihood of tripping. Too much tread can cause the shoe to grab the ground, while a smooth slippery sole will make the shoe slip; both of which increase your risk of falling.

► **Bevelled heel**

A rounded heel improves slip resistance by increasing the surface contact area of the shoe as the heel strikes the floor; this may help lessen slip-related falls.

► **Heel collar height**

A firm, supportive heel is recommended.

Common foot complaints

- Corns and calluses
- Ingrown toenails
- Thick toenails

These foot complaints are all very common and can be very painful. People with foot complaints will often alter the way they walk to take the pressure off the sore. This can impact your walking style and balance, which can cause a fall. It is best to see your GP or Podiatrist if you have any foot complaints. As well as treating the issue, they can find shoes specifically for your feet and any foot conditions.




Self-care

You can keep your feet healthy as you age through proper maintenance, care and regular check-ups with your Podiatrist.

Here are some things you can do:

- ▶ Moisturise your feet daily. Your skin is the first line of defence to injury infection. Keep it healthy and flexible; not dry, papery and fragile.
- ▶ If you can cut your toenails yourself, make sure you trim them just short of the end of the toe, using a strong pair of nail clippers.
- ▶ After clipping, smooth the nails with a file or emery board, using downward strokes away from the body.
- ▶ It is also important to have your feet measured frequently as the bones in your feet change with age, this way you can ensure you choose shoes that fit well and are comfortable. Where possible ask for your feet to be measured when buying shoes.
- ▶ Clean between toes daily. If you can't see your feet between your toes, use mirrors.
- ▶ Complete an annual check-up with your Podiatrist to assess the nerve and blood supply to your feet

Who can help

- ▶ Podiatry WA
 podiatrywa.com.au
- ▶ Your local Podiatrist (see back page)
- ▶ Your GP

If you have a fall at home:

**DON'T
PANIC**

**STAY CALM, REMAIN
POSITIVE AND ASSESS
THE SITUATION**

**DECIDE WHETHER
OR NOT YOU CAN
GET UP SAFELY**

IF YOU CAN GET UP SAFELY

Roll onto your side and push up onto your hands and knees.

Stand up slowly and safely.

Use stable furniture to help yourself sit up.

Make sure you rest.

Tell someone you have fallen and see your doctor.

IF YOU CAN'T GET UP SAFELY

It is important to get somebody's attention.

You can:

- ▶ **Make a loud noise.**
- ▶ **Try and reach for the phone.**
- ▶ **Slide or crawl to the front door.**
- ▶ **Press your personal alarm.**
- ▶ **Make sure you conserve your energy and lie quietly until someone who can help you arrives.**

Use the attached diagrams: How To Get Up Off The Floor for more tips.

We hope this resource and information has helped you on your way to removing hazards and on a pathway to keeping safe and free from falls.

HOW CAN I GET UP OFF THE FLOOR?

Using my arms

1 Turn onto your back



2 Roll onto your side



3 Push onto your hands



4 Prop yourself up with both arms behind you



Visit www.stayonyourfeet.com.au or call 1300 30 35 40

- 5** Use a cushion (or other low sturdy object) as a low seat



- 6** Lift bottom back onto cushion



- 7** Push as far back as possible



- 8** Lift bottom back onto chair



- 9** Sit down. Rest and tell someone you have fallen



Visit www.stayonyourfeet.com.au or call 1300 30 35 40

HOW CAN I GET UP OFF THE FLOOR?

Using my knees

1 Turn onto your back



2 Roll onto your side



3 Push onto your hands



4 Push up onto your hands and knees



Visit www.stayonyourfeet.com.au or call 1300 30 35 40

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



- 6** Place your strongest leg forward



- 7** Stand up



- 8** Turn slowly



- 9** Sit down. Rest and tell someone you have fallen



Visit www.stayonyourfeet.com.au or call 1300 30 35 40

Optometrists in the Kalamunda Area

Specsavers Optometrists	Kalamunda Central 11 Railway Road, Kalamunda	☎ 08 9293 1820
Kalamunda Optical	Barberry Square Shopping Centre Shop 16, 12 Barber Street, Kalamunda	☎ 08 9293 3754
OPSM Kalamunda	Kalamunda Centro Shopping Centre, Shop 28, 39 Railway Road, Kalamunda	☎ 08 9257 2911
Alva Optical	19 Bottega Place, Lesmurdie	☎ 0418 923 994

Podiatrists in the Kalamunda Area

Perth Diabetes Care	Shop 6, 12 Barber Street, Kalamunda	☎ 08 6110 0570
Kalamunda Wellness Centre	21 Railway Road, Kalamunda	☎ 08 9257 2553
Kalamunda Podiatry	1A Railway Road, Kalamunda	☎ 08 9293 4524
Lesmurdie Podiatry	Shop 10, 35 Sanderson Road, Lesmurdie	☎ 08 6394 2656
Forrestfield Podiatry	Suite 3, 76 Hale Road, Forrestfield	☎ 08 9359 3668
Hills Podiatry	113 Edney Road, High Wycombe	☎ 08 9454 4431
Eden Podiatry Clinic	Shop 6, 492 Kalamunda Road, High Wycombe	☎ 08 9454 7167

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request.
Please contact the City of Kalamunda on 9257 9999