

Looking after yourself this winter



During the winter time, we tend to spend more time inside at home.

We may be sitting down far more and for longer periods of time and not going outside and exercising as much.

This means we may be losing the necessary strength in our muscles and bones and losing the stamina to go about every day activities.

**Is it time to make positive
changes to your life?**

Look after yourself – this winter and in the future.

You need to be more active:

- the older you are
- the more long-term conditions you have

Look out for these small changes in your ability to go about daily life:

- Reduced strength
- Harder to get out of a chair without using your arms
- Feeling a little more unsteady or finding it harder work to get out of the car, or get on and off the bus

Are you spending more time alone during the winter months?

More time alone can reduce quality of life. It can increase:

- levels of loneliness, anxiety and other mental health concerns
- risk of having a fall, either at home or away from the home

Regular physical activity can:

- improve our immune system
- have anti-inflammatory effects
- help us feel better physically and mentally
- improve sleep, independence and sense of wellbeing

For those with chronic conditions, being more active has many benefits.

Regular activity can reduce your chances of:

- **Diabetes (Type 2)** by up to 40%
- **Hip fractures** by up to 68%
- **Depression** by up to 30%
- **Dementia** by up to 30%
- **Dying (of any cause)** by up to 30%
- **Joint and back pain** by 25%
- **Cardiovascular disease** (such as stroke or heart attack) by up to 35%
- **Certain types of cancer:** colon cancer by up to 30% and breast cancer by up to 20%

Is it time to make some positive changes to your lifestyle?

It's important not to think that these very subtle changes are an inevitable part of ageing. There are simple things that you can do to increase your activity, strength and balance which help you to keep enjoying doing the things you enjoy the most in life.

Fall-proof exercises

1. Heel to toe stand:

Hold on to something solid and immovable (your kitchen counter might be good) and stand with your heel to your toe. Like standing on a tightrope. Hold for 10 seconds. Try to gradually reduce your hand support, then gently put your other foot in front and hold again.



2. Heel to toe walk

Hold on to something solid and immovable (your kitchen counter might be good) and stand with your heel to your toe. Like standing on a tightrope. Progress this by slowly walking along the counter, heel to toe in a straight line. Turn around and go back again. Walk for a few steps in each direction.



3. Heel raise

Stand facing a solid support, holding lightly to start with and carry on holding as needed. Lift your heels off the floor keeping your weight through the balls of your feet, then lower. Do this slowly, and repeat up to 10 times



4. Toe raise

Stand facing a solid support, holding lightly to start with and carry on holding as needed. Lift your toes off the floor, putting your weight through your heels, then lower. Do this slowly and repeat up to 10 times.



5. Single leg balance

Stand facing a solid support, holding lightly to start with and carry on holding as needed. Lift one foot off the floor and hold for 10-15 seconds, then change legs over and repeat this a couple of times.



6. Sit to stand

Sit up straight, towards the front of the chair. Place your feet slightly back, heels down and lean forward slightly. Stand up from the chair. If you do need hand support aim to reduce this over time. Then, step back until the back of your legs touch the chair, then lower yourself slowly until you sit down. If you need to use your hands aim to reduce this over time. Repeat this five times or more.



The Fall-proof plan offers additional home exercises, videos and information on community group classes across Gloucestershire

www.fallproof.me

Age UK Gloucestershire offers support, advice and guidance

t: 01452 422660
e: helpteam@ageukgloucestershire.org.uk
www.ageuk.org.uk/gloucestershire

Gloucestershire Carers Hub offers a range of services for those who looking after a relative or friend

t: 0300 111 9000
e: carers@peopleplus.co.uk
www.gloucestershirecarershub.co.uk

Let's talk offers mental health support

t: 0800 073 2200
www.letstalkglos.nhs.uk
(Gloucestershire Health and Care Services NHS Trust)