



# A Guide to Prevent Falls

Assistive technology is a piece of equipment, device or system that provides people with practical solutions to everyday life activities. You can search our National Equipment Database [www.askned.com.au](http://www.askned.com.au) to view a range of products online.

**The following falls prevention principles can assist you to access your environment in a safe manner. It is important to consider both personal behaviours as well as the physical environment.**

## Physical Environment

**Lighting:** Ensure good lighting in and around the home. Night and sensor lights can be useful to assist with night visibility. Leaving a light on at night (such as a bedside lamp), is especially useful if you get up regularly during the night.

**Floors:** Remove mats where not needed and use non-slip mats in the bathroom. Placing a non-slip mat under rugs or taping the ends down can reduce trip hazards. Applying slip resistant tapes or treatments to the floor and tiles can be a safer alternative especially in wet areas.

**Rails/stairs:** Install handrails on both sides where there are steps. Install grab rails by the toilet, bath and shower and even in hallways if required. Always climb stairs using the rails for support. Use your strongest leg first followed by the weaker leg.

**Ramps and stair lifts:** If stairs are becoming an issue, or cannot be used anymore, installation of a ramp or stair lift may be appropriate.

**Shower seats/bath transfer benches:** The hot and wet shower environment can sometimes affect balance. Therefore, using a stool, chair or flip down seat can be useful. Ensure the legs of the chair have non-slip stoppers on them. Transfer benches assist with getting into the bath safely and allow the user to remain seated for bathing. These are particularly useful if your shower is over your bath.

**Modify the shower:** Install a level walk in shower, if possible, to reduce risk of falls. Consult a plumber when removing a hob as this will affect drainage in wet areas.

**Over toilet frames or raised toilet seats:** offer a higher surface when seated, which is easier for transfers. They can also come with support arms to assist with getting up.

**Outside:** Look out for hazards. Put hoses, plants, and other items away from paths. Put down a slip resistant surface where needed.

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## Personal behaviours

**Health:** Have regular checks with your G.P and inform them of any changes in your health e.g. vision, balance, muscle weakness and bladder control.

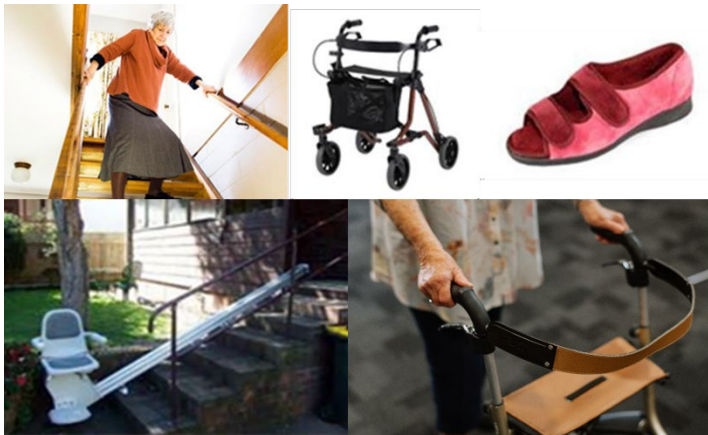
**Exercise:** Continue to exercise regularly to help maintain walking ability and muscle strength. See a physiotherapist for recommendations on what exercises to do.

**Take your time:** Sometimes, particularly when on multiple medications, getting up from a chair or seated position can cause postural hypotension or dizziness. Stand up slowly or consider getting a recliner lift chair to reduce the chance of dizziness.

**Walking aids:** Consider the use of a mobility aid, such as a walking stick or wheeled walker, if you are concerned about your balance. It is important to discuss this with a physiotherapist.

**Footwear:** Wearing appropriate shoes for the activity can make a significant difference in comfort and safety. Shoes with a non-slip sole and which are secured to the foot (laces, Velcro, straps) are best.

Low heeled shoes with a supportive inner sole are better for balance. Having your feet measured at the store or by a podiatrist will ensure you get the size and style of shoe right for you. Consult a podiatrist for further information on foot health.



**Indigo has a large range of equipment on display and products available to trial. Our experienced health professionals can provide strategies and advice on the right product for you.**

**Please contact us using the details below for further information or to book an appointment. Appointments can be conducted by phone, email, face-to-face or video call.**

**Did you know Indigo also offers a range of other services? Please ask us when you call or visit [www.indigosolutions.org.au](http://www.indigosolutions.org.au).**