

A guide to managing your medicines to reduce your risk of a fall

Medicines are prescribed to help your short-term or long-term health, however some can occasionally make you feel dizzy or drowsy and make you more at risk of falling over. It is important that the medicines you take are regularly reviewed by a member of your general practice team or a pharmacist to ensure they are still right for you and to reduce the chance of unwanted side effects.

Keep track of your medicines

- Keep an **up to date** list of all the medicines you are taking (including those prescribed AND bought over the counter) and carry it with you in your wallet or purse.
- Keep your medicines in the packaging, so you can refer back to the instructions later.
- Ask a pharmacist for help if you find it difficult to get medicines out of their packets or containers.

Review your medicines

- Certain medicines can sometimes make you feel dizzy, drowsy or unsteady on your feet and contribute to the risk of falling, especially if taken together. This may happen when you first start to take them and may not last for long, but if it continues, please speak to your GP practice or pharmacist.
- Have a medication review with a healthcare professional at your GP practice at least once a year to ensure all your medicines are still working for you.
- Your pharmacist can give advice and explain your medication if you are unsure about how and when to take them.
- If you have an urgent problem with your medicines, talk to a pharmacist or your GP practice.

More tips to help you reduce your risk of falling

- When a new medicine is prescribed for you, check with the prescriber the best time of day to take it. Use this opportunity to discuss BRAN (Benefits, Risks, Alternatives, do Nothing).
- Some medicines may make you feel confused or change your vision making it harder to clearly see your surroundings. Report adverse effects to your GP practice.
- Drinking alcohol with some medications can also increase your risk of falls.
- If you do not know why you are taking a particular medicine, check with a pharmacist.
- Always take your prescribed medicine as instructed on the label.
- Don't change or stop any medication without talking to your GP practice or pharmacist.
- For more advice on preventing a fall visit: www.ageuk.org.uk and search '**Staying Steady**'.