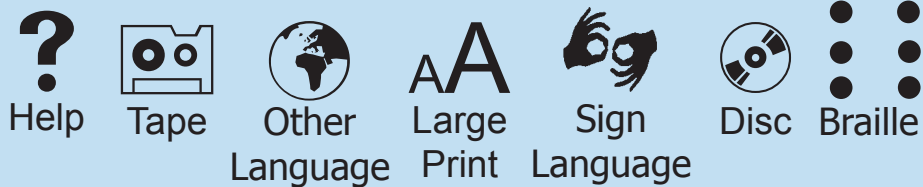


Taking Positive Steps



**How to avoid
slips, trips and
stumbles**





Please ask us if you need help to understand this information or you need it in other formats.

Customer Services

Telephone: 020 8547 6008

Fax: 020 8547 6153

Minicom: 020 8547 5819

Email: cust.serv@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

What is a fall?

A 'fall' is anything that is a result of a loss of balance. It may also be called a slip, trip or a stumble and may not result in any injury.

Falls facts

- ➔ 1 in 3 older people living in the community fall each year
- ➔ 67% of falls result in fractured hips
- ➔ Hip fractures cost the NHS £1.7 billion every year
- ➔ 40% of Care Home admissions are as a result of a fall
- ➔ Fear of falling can limit people's daily activities

What to do if you have fallen?

Tell someone! Inform your GP, your family, a friend or a neighbour and make sure you get some help. There are many services available in the Borough that can help you to reduce your risk of falling.



Why do people fall?

The most common reasons why people fall are because of:

- A medical condition
- Side effects of medications
- The wrong footwear
- Foot problems
- Poor vision
- Hearing problems
- Lack of exercise
- Alcohol abuse
- Hazards in the home
- Poor lighting
- Loose fitting rugs and carpets
- Uneven pavements and road surfaces



10 top tips to prevent falls

- 1 Ask your GP to review your medication every 6 months
- 2 Keep wires and cables out of the way, never allow them to trail across the room
- 3 Keep active and do some exercise every day if you can
- 4 Make sure that your home is well lit, especially on stairs and landings
- 5 Take care of your feet and get your toenails cut regularly
- 6 If possible, keep items within easy reach to avoid climbing, bending and stretching
- 7 Get your eyesight checked at least every 2 years
- 8 Use handrails on stairs and in your bathroom
- 9 Make sure your shoes and slippers fit you well
- 10 Take extra care on worn and loose carpets and rugs





General Safety

- Remove any rugs or loose floor coverings
- Secure down loose or torn carpets
- Make sure all rooms, stairs and hallways are well lit
- Do not stand on a chair to reach items up high
- Consider having handrails on both sides of the stairs
- Secure down any flexes or cables around the edge of the room
- Re-arrange or remove some belongings / furniture to give yourself more room to walk around

Safety in the bedroom

- Make sure you have a bed of a good height with a firm mattress
- Make sure you have a light or torch and a telephone beside the bed
- Think about having a commode by your bed if your bedroom is not near to the bathroom
- Always turn the light on when you get up at night

Safety in the bathroom

- To ease getting up from the toilet, consider having a raised toilet seat or handrails
- If you are having difficulty getting in or out of the bath, consider having rails or other equipment to help you
- Have a chair in the bathroom (space permitting) for if you feel tired, unsteady or dizzy at any time
- Use non-slip mats

Safety in the kitchen

- Try to slide things across the work surface rather than carrying things
- Use a trolley to carry drinks and meals from the kitchen to the dining or living room
- Keep all frequently used items within easy reach





Are you at risk of falling?

The questions below will help you see if you may be at risk of falling. If you have answered YES to 3 or more questions, we suggest you go to see your GP to get your medication reviewed or to get your eyesight checked, for example.

Your GP will also be able to refer you to Kingston's Falls Service which provides advice for anyone who has fallen or is at risk of falling. The Falls Service can also put you in touch with other services that can help.

- Have you ever slipped or tripped in your own home?
- Have you had one or more falls in the last year?
- Do you have problems with your feet?
- Do you take more than 4 medicines a day?
- Do you have difficulty hearing?
- Do you sometimes feel dizzy when you stand, sit up or get up from the bed?
- Do you have difficulty recognising an object across the room or have you recently started wearing bi-focals?
- Are you unsteady on your feet, or do you shuffle or take uneven steps?

- Do you need to hold on to furniture to balance or need a cane or walker?
- Do you have diabetes, heart problems, low blood pressure, incontinence or had a stroke?

What to do if you fall



Try not to panic. Get help if you can.

- Don't move if you feel pain.
- Try to attract attention by banging on the floor or wall, using a personal alarm if you have one, or by calling 999 if you can reach a phone

If you are not hurt and can't get help, and you are not hurt, try to get up.

A lot of people have problems after falling, even if they don't hurt themselves. This is because they lie on the floor for a long time and get cold.

- First, check that you are not hurt.
- Then roll onto your hands and knees and crawl to a sturdy piece of furniture, for example, a chair or bed



- Put your hands on the chair or bed and bring one leg up, bending your knee and placing your foot flat on the floor
- Lean forwards, pushing with your hands and foot and bring your other foot up so that it is also flat on the floor and you are crouching
- Turn and sit on the piece of furniture
- Make sure you rest for a while before you try and stand up

If you are hurt or can't get up, keep yourself warm.

- Cover yourself with a coat or anything else you can find
- Keep tensing your arm and leg muscles and roll from side to side if you can to keep moving
- If you have fallen on a hard floor, try to crawl to a softer, carpeted area if possible

Local contacts

Age Concern Kingston

For services and activities for older people.

Telephone: 020 8942 8256



Health and Social Care Teams for Older People

For care and support services to keep you independent.

Kingston Team. **Telephone:** 020 8547 6012

New Malden Team. **Telephone:** 020 8547 6049

Surbiton Team. **Telephone:** 020 8547 6845

Chessington Team. **Telephone:** 020 8547 6850

Royal Borough of Kingston Highways Department

To report falls on a pavement.

Telephone: 020 8547 5929

House Proud Home repair grants

The worry free way to repair, improve or adapt your home.

Telephone: 0800 783 7569

Community Care Services Activity Officer

For various activities for older people.

Telephone: 020 8547 6114

Walking for Health

For local led walks.

Telephone: 020 8547 5312



Transport for London


If you fall on London buses contact customer services.

Telephone: 0845 300 7000

Help the Aged

For information about preventing falls and their leaflet 'Staying Steady'.

Telephone: 020 7278 1114



To order more copies of this leaflet,
or to tell us what you think of it,
please contact our
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Customer Services

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Minicom: 020 8547 5819

Email: cust.serv@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

For more information about our services,
visit our website:

www.kingston.gov.uk/communitycareservices

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