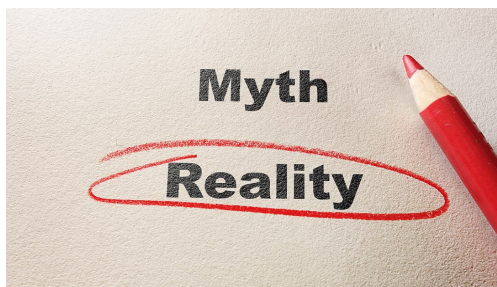


Hello and welcome to our August 2021 edition
of our Falls Prevention newsletter

Myths and Reality



10 common myths—and the reality—about older adult falls

Myth 1: Falling happens to other people, not to me.



Reality: Many people think, "It won't happen to me." But the truth is that 1 in 3 older adults fall every year in the UK.

Myth 2: Falling is something normal that happens as you get older.

Reality: Falling is not a normal part of ageing. Strength and balance exercises, managing your medications, having your vision checked and making your living environment safer are all steps you can take to prevent a fall.

Myth 3: If I limit my activity, I won't fall.



Reality: Some people believe that the best way to prevent falls is to stay at home and limit activity. Not true. Performing physical activities will actually help you stay independent, as your strength and range of motion benefit from remaining active. Social activities are also good for your overall health.



Myth 4: As long as I stay at home, I can avoid falling.

Reality: Over half of all falls take place at home. Inspect your home for fall risks. Fix simple but serious hazards such as clutter, throw rugs, and poor lighting. Make simple home modifications, such as adding grab bars in the bathroom, a second handrail on stairs, and non-slip paint on outdoor steps.



Myth 5: Muscle strength and flexibility can't be regained.

Reality: While we do lose muscle as we age, exercise can partially restore strength and flexibility. It's never too late to start an exercise programme. Even if you've been a "couch potato" your whole life, becoming active now will benefit you in many ways including protection from falls.



Myth 6: Taking medication doesn't increase my risk of falling.

Reality: Taking any medication may increase your risk of falling. Medications affect people in many different ways and can sometimes make you dizzy or sleepy. Be careful when starting a new medication. Talk to your health care provider about potential side effects or interactions of your medications.



Myth 7: I don't need to get my vision checked every year.

Reality: Vision is another key risk factor for falls. Ageing is associated with some forms of vision loss that increase risk of falling and injury. People with vision problems are more than twice as likely to fall as those without visual impairment. Have your eyes checked at least once a year and update your glasses. For those with low vision there are programmes and assistive devices that can help. Ask your optician for a referral.



Myth 8: Using a walker or walking stick will make me more dependent.

Reality: Walking aids are very important in helping many older adults maintain or improve their mobility. However, make sure you use these devices safely. Have your walker or walking stick adjusted for you and make sure you know how to use them safely - ask your doctor or physiotherapist.



Myth 9: I don't need to talk to family members or my health care provider if I'm concerned about my risk of falling. I don't want to alarm them, and I want to keep my independence.

Reality: Fall prevention is a team effort. Bring it up with your doctor, family, and anyone else who is in a position to help. They want to help you maintain your mobility and reduce your risk of falling.

Myth 10: I don't need to talk to my parent, spouse, or other older adult if I'm concerned about their risk of falling. It will hurt their feelings, and it's none of my business.

Reality: Let them know about your concerns and offer support to help them maintain the highest degree of independence possible.



Keeping independent - Useful services



Helpline and Response Service

Unit 3 Whitney Court

Southlink Business Park

Oldham OL4 1DB

0161 770 5189



How it works

If you sign up for this service you will receive a personal alarm unit which connects you to trained staff in a response centre based in Oldham.

In an emergency situation you can summon help by pressing a button on the unit or a small portable button which can be attached to your clothing, wrist strap or a neck cord and this can be carried anywhere in the home. The approximate range is up to 20 metres.

When you press the alarm, the operator at the response centre will be able to talk to you and assess the situation. The operator will then inform your contact, or send assistance.

If you press the button and you are unable to respond they will dispatch a responder to your address immediately or contact your next of kin.

There is a small charge for installation and 3 different levels of service charge. You can ring for more information or you can also read more and apply online through the Oldham Council website (search for Helpline and Response Service).



Looking after yourself in hot weather



**KEEP
CALM**

AND

KEEP COOL

Stay safe in the Sun

It can be fun to get out and enjoy sunshine, and the vitamin D provided by the sun can help with your overall health. However, too much sun can be damaging. Overexposure to sun can cause wrinkles, sunburn, and skin damage. Too much sun can also increase your risk for skin cancer.



Melanoma skin cancer is the 5th most common cancer in the UK, but almost 9 in 10 cases could be prevented through enjoying the sun safely and avoiding sunbeds.

What is sunburn and how does it increase the risk?



What sunscreen should I be using?

First of all, sunscreen shouldn't be the only port of call - covering up with a hat, sunglasses and clothing and seeking shade are the best ways to protect skin from damage. But, while no sunscreen provides 100% protection, it does help protect skin from UV radiation if used properly. Cancer Research UK recommends using **at least SPF 15 (UVB protection) and a rating of 4 or 5 stars (UVA protection).**

There's a common myth that higher SPF rating offers more protection – this isn't true. When applied correctly SPF15 should provide enough UV protection and higher SPFs don't add much more protection. The most important thing about using sunscreen is to **apply generously, reapply often throughout the day and after swimming or sweating.** Even "once-a-day" sunscreens must be re-applied regularly to be effective.

Another thing to make people aware of is that **sunscreens do expire.** Some sunscreens include an expiration date — a date indicating when they're no longer effective. Discard sunscreen that is past its expiration date. If you buy sunscreen that doesn't have an expiration date, write the date of purchase on the bottle. Throw out the bottle when three years have passed since the purchase date.



Don't I need vitamin D from the sun for my health?



We all need vitamin D - it helps our bodies build and maintain strong bones. But while sunlight is the main source of vitamin D, it's also the main cause of skin cancer. So how are we supposed to safely get what we need from the sun?

Everyone needs a different amount of time in the sun to get enough vitamin D - it depends on skin type, time of day, time of year. That's why there isn't a handy set recommendation that suits everyone. The bottom line is that **most people in the UK get the vitamin D they need from short, casual exposure**. This can be while just going about your daily business outside - much less exposure than it takes to burn or tan. Those not getting enough vitamin D can talk to their doctor about taking supplements.

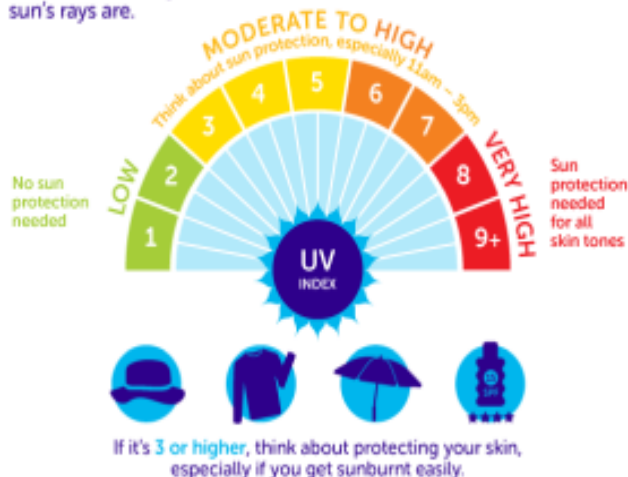
I don't have to bother with sun protection if it's cloudy, do I?

This is a myth – you can't always tell how strong the sun is just by looking up!

People could be at risk of sun damage even on overcast or rainy days. UV rays can penetrate clouds, and if it's windy too it's even easier to get burnt without noticing. The answer is to check the [Met Office's UV index](#) before going outside - it shows how strong the sun will be that day. If it's 3 or above, you will need to think about protecting your skin, especially if you burn easily or have a fairer complexion.

DON'T LET SUNBURN CATCH YOU OUT

Check the UV index at www.metoffice.gov.uk/uv to see how strong the sun's rays are.





Beat the Heat

Coping with heat & COVID-19

Stay cool at home



Many of us will need to stay safe at home this summer



Know how to keep your home cool



Look out for others safely, follow COVID-19 guidance

Stay cool, keep well



Drink plenty of fluids and avoid excess alcohol



Slow down when it is hot



Stay connected, listen to the forecast

Cooler, safer places



Go indoors or outdoors, whichever feels cooler



Self-isolate at home if advised to do so



Use cool spaces considerately, keep your distance

Watch out



Be on the lookout for signs of heat related illness



Cool your skin with water, slow down and drink water



Stay safe when swimming



Get help. Call NHS 111 or in an emergency 999

For more information go to www.nhs.uk/heatwave

Summer heat - how to cope in hot weather.

Most at risk:

Older people

People who spend a lot of time outside

Those who live on their own or in a care home

Those who may find it hard to keep cool, like babies



Close curtains on rooms that face the sun to keep indoor spaces cooler and remember it may be cooler outdoors than indoors



Drink plenty of fluids and avoid excess alcohol



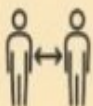
Never leave anyone in a closed, parked vehicle, especially infants, young children or animals



Walk in the shade, apply sunscreen regularly and wear a wide brimmed hat, if you have to go out in the heat



Avoid exercising in the hottest parts of the day



If going outdoors, use cool spaces considerately, keep your distance in line with social distancing guidelines

BBC

Source: NHS



Name: _____



August Word Search



AUGUST

SUMMER

VACATION

SCHOOL

PERIDOT

AUGUSTUS

ORANGE

LEO

VIRGO

GLADIOLUS

FRIENDSHIP DAY

POPPY

HOT

POOL

SARDONYX

Have we got all your details?

If we haven't already done so, Teresa, Anne and Nicola will be contacting you over the next few weeks and making sure that we have all your correct details, next of kin, emergency contact, mobile number, and email (if you have them), etc. so you might want to jot them down on a piece of paper and keep it handy for when we ring you!



Mobile telephone number

Email address

Next of kin/Emergency contact name

Emergency telephone number

Permission to share data in emergency

Thank you



Coronavirus guidance from Oldham Council

We are following the Government's plans to relax some COVID-19 restrictions but it's still important to follow the rules to keep your family and friends safe.

Thank you for everything you have done to keep one another safe over the last year and a half.

None of this work could have been done without you.

While cases are high and rising, everybody needs to continue to act carefully and remain cautious.

You should:

- Minimise the number of people you meet and the amount of time you spend with them
- Maintain a reasonable distance when you do meet people
- Spend time outside and make sure rooms are well ventilated

[Get tested](#) regularly and isolate if you are positive

[Get vaccinated](#) when you are offered it, and encourage others to do so as well

- If you have had your first vaccine make sure you get your second

Wear a [face coverings or mask](#) in busy indoor settings, crowded areas and public transport to protect yourself and others

Advice for people at highest risk of coronavirus

If you have been identified as clinically extremely vulnerable you are no longer advised to shield.

However, you should continue to take extra precautions to protect yourself.



Contact Numbers

Teresa Griffiths 07841 344194

Neil Wise 07720 613920

Nicola Shore 07859 355954

Make a note of anything you might want to ask us next time we contact you!

