

How can we keep our bones strong and healthy and help prevent falls?

If we have a fall, sometimes it can decrease our confidence, which makes us less independent. Several different factors and body systems, including vision, touch, the inner ear and physical strength and flexibility contribute to staying steady. All these come together to help you feel confident of your body's place in the environment. However, there are changes we can make which can help get us back to enjoying life again!

Regular exercise is key and current guidance recommends 30 minutes of activity five times weekly. Now, before you start to channel your inner Olympic athlete, this may consist of doing just a bit more of what you do already like gardening, walks or housework.

Many people also worry about breaking bones if they fall, especially if they have osteoporosis. Osteoporosis is a condition where bones lose their strength and are more likely to fracture, usually following a minor bump or fall. This is part of the natural aging process, however there are simple lifestyle changes we can take to help prevent or manage osteoporosis.

Eating a healthy diet can improve bone strength, especially if you include foods containing calcium and vitamin D. Weight bearing exercises and exercises to improve your balance can also help to strengthen your bones and reduce your risk of falls.

Between the ages of 50 – 70, we lose around 30% of our muscle strength, therefore muscle strengthening is particularly recommended for over 65s. Look out for local resource centre groups, leisure centres or walking groups that will help you get moving with others around. You may also see Get up and Go booklets in the waiting areas of the Physiotherapy Centre. These are full of helpful hints and tips, produced in conjunction with the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, Saga and Public Health England. Pages 16-17 contain some useful exercises you could do to get started.

Remember, having an increased risk of fractures doesn't mean they are inevitable! If you have been told you have osteoporosis or have any questions regarding it or falls, please speak to our physiotherapy team.



Pilates Classes

Our Pilates class is run every Monday morning 9.30 – 10.30 in 6 week courses, by Mel Wilks, one of our physiotherapists. This is a great form of exercise if you're recovering from back pain, or are wanting to improve upon your global body strength, flexibility, posture or body control. Get in touch to find out the next course start date and to book your place, either on 01428 647647 or via email therapy@holycross.org.uk.



Free From Falls Class

At The Physiotherapy Centre we are relaunching our Free from Falls class in October. It applies the principles of strengthening and flexibility for balance, in a physiotherapist led, group environment. If you would like to know more about the class then please ask any of our staff. You would need to book in to see one of our physiotherapists for an assessment prior to attending the class. Alternatively, if you already see a physiotherapist, we have referral forms available for them to refer you into our class.

The Physiotherapy Centre

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In this issue...

We'll be taking a look at some of the prime causes of falls, and giving you some tips on how you can help keep yourself safe and active.

Also, look out for key updates from the physiotherapy team!



Newsletter Autumn 2016

The


physiotherapy centre

At Holy Cross Hospital

The Physiotherapy Centre Updates

One-to-one sessions

We offer fully comprehensive physiotherapy appointments in our gym with one of our experienced Physiotherapists. They will use their expertise to work with you to outline the best course of treatment for your individual condition. Together, we will set goals for your rehabilitation and how these can be achieved. We also offer appointments in our state of the art hydrotherapy pool. Just contact our friendly reception team who will give you any further information you need on 01428 647647 or email therapy@holycross.org.uk.



Don't Fall For It!

Time to tackle some myths about falling

It's just an inevitable part of getting older... Not necessarily. It's true that our falling risk increases as we age, however the vast majority of falls could be prevented by some simple changes to your home or lifestyle.

Six out of ten falls happen in the home or garden, so it's time to fall-proof your home!

- Clutter can present a real falls risk, so clear away any clutter, especially in halls and doorways.

- Check all rugs have a non-slip underlay and replace worn ones.

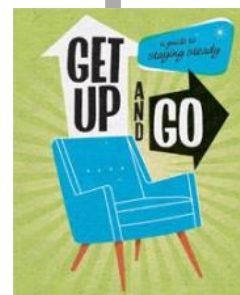
- Never walk around in the dark – if you regularly get up in the night to use the loo, keep a torch by the bed or keep the landing light on.

If you're worried about falling away from home, take some simple precautions so that you can continue with all your activities.

- Take your time and don't rush

- Scan an area for trip hazards – cracked pavements, uneven surfaces – before walking

- Don't be embarrassed to use a walking aid if it helps you stay steady!



Sometimes, when we worry about falling, we restrict our activities and spend longer periods sitting down. This harms balance, body strength and mobility which in turn makes a fall more likely. Our physiotherapy team is here to help guide you as to which exercises and activities may help improve balance, strength and coordination and help to keep you active and independent.