

Village Agent News for November 2016

Last week I visited one of the social clubs on my patch. Two physiotherapists came along and gave a very interesting talk about **Fall Prevention**. I was particularly interested as, for some of the people who I visit, concerns about falling can be very real. So I will share with you a little of what I have learnt. It is a fact that one in three people over 65 will have a fall each year. And it's true that our risk of falling increases as we age. However there are ways that we can minimise the risk of this happening.

Regular physical activity strengthens muscles, whatever your age. Whether you choose walking, gardening or attend an exercise class, do some exercise. I recently met a woman of 83 who has just begun to do yoga! Some classes are tailored to the needs of those who are more mature, like seated yoga or the "Extend" classes that are available locally and offer gentle exercise. If this is too much for you to contemplate you could contact your Health Centre or physiotherapist for a list of gentle seated exercises that can be done at home, or I can send you a booklet called "Get Up and Go" that gives diagrams of simple exercises to help strength and balance.

Many falls happen in the home or garden so it is a good idea to make sure your lighting is bright enough and that there are no trailing cables. You could just take a look around your home to make sure there are no trip hazards. If it would help to have grab rails beside steps etc. perhaps now is the time to arrange for some to be fitted and if you live alone and can be a bit wobbly on your feet a "**Careline**" pendant is a great choice.

Another thing that you might consider is your footwear. Do you wear comfy and snugly fitting shoes or slippers or are they a bit floppy? Maybe take regular visits to the chiropodist. You might also consider having an eyes test regularly or if you sometimes feel dizzy talk to your doctor about it, he or she may be able to help. And finally if you use a walking aid make sure that it is right for you.

When you are out and about go at a speed that is comfortable for you, don't let others rush or fluster you, and don't be embarrassed to use a walking aid if it helps you to stay steady. Finally, try using a rucksack if you have things to carry, then you can have both hands free.

If you would like help or advice about getting any of the things that I have mentioned you can talk to your health professional or I can make a referral for you.

Now for something a little different. Do you have a community group in your area that would benefit from receiving 50 free trees? If so contact the **Ready. Steady. Grow.** programme, on the following link to nominate your local group

<http://www.tcv.org.uk/community/i-dig-trees>

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