

## General advice for going up and down stairs

### Keeping Active

- > Climbing stairs is an easy everyday physical activity that keeps your upper and lower limbs strong and muscles toned. Use it, or lose it is a mantra you may have heard and is so true for keeping mobile.

### Preparation

- > Ensure that you wear footwear that fits well (e.g. not sloppy fitting slippers), with good grips and thin soles so that you can feel where you put your feet on the step.
- > Keep the area around the stairs clear and attend to any loose or worn floor coverings as they can become a tripping hazard.
- > The stairs should be well-lit at all times.

### Comfort

- > If you tire easily, go up the stairs one step at a time and take your time.
- > When climbing the stairs remember 'good leg to heaven', 'bad leg to hell' when coming down.

### Safety

- > Polished wood staircases are slippery and can be a risk to you.

- > If your heel is hanging off the back of the step on the way up the stairs, or the ball of the foot is not on the step as you come down the stairs, then come down the stairs slowly and go sideways.
- > If you are afraid of going down the stairs try going sideways or backwards ONE STEP AT A TIME – ALWAYS using the hand rail for support. When going up and down the stairs, all the forces goes through the knees, going either sideward or backward will help to reduce this.
- > Do not leave items on the stairs as these can become a tripping hazard.
- > Do not carry things up and down the stairs – make sure you have both hands free to steady yourself on the hand rail. You could use a backpack to put things in.
- > When using a spiral staircase always walk on the widest part of the step.