

## Hints and tips on walking around safely

### Preventing trips and falls

- > Keeping fit will make you stronger and help prevent falling.
- > Regular physical activity helps to keep us independent and can increase our strength, balance and coordination. If you are fitter and stronger you are less likely to have a fall.
- > It is recommended to take 30 minutes of moderate exercise per day. This should be just enough to increase your breathing and heart rate slightly faster than normal, so do not over exert yourself. Your daily exercise can be broken into smaller chunks, perhaps in shorter 10-minute bursts. Try to increase the amount of time you spend exercising slowly each day, and gradually make activities more energetic.
- > Find activities that you find enjoyable. This can be exercise classes, swimming, dancing, walking, gardening, housework, bowling, or exercises at home.

- > Get a walking buddy with a long-term aim to walk more and go on local health walks or try joining local walking groups to keep your motivation to keep active and healthy. Remember to take your mobile phone as a safety precaution, especially if you're out on your own.
- > Try to build exercise into your daily routine and reduce the amount of time sitting and being inactive. One way to do this would be by taking short walks around the house during TV advert breaks.

## **Footwear**

- > Using the right footwear at the right time is very important. Any shoes or slippers that you wear should fit you correctly and support your feet and ankles depending on where you are and what you are doing.
- > It is recommended to wear comfortable shoes with cushioned non-slip soles. Try to avoid wearing heels when walking as these can decrease your balance and stability. Footwear protect and support your feet, so you should not walk in stockings or bare feet.

## **Making your home safe**

- > Visibility is important. Make sure both the inside and outside of your home are brightly lit.
- > Ask a trusted, professional electrician about your lighting options – such as branched lights to replace single bulbs – to increase light without glare.
- > Ensure that any outdoor paths or walkways are free of clutter and mess.
- > Take care to have any loose paving or slabs secured and fill in any holes in pathways.
- > Avoid trailing cables from lamps that could trip you.
- > Be organised when bringing new items into your home. Place things in safe areas or out of the way of paths and walkways, until you get used to where they are located.
- > Consider fitting two-way switches on the landing/hall and/or extra stair lighting.
- > Never walk about in the dark. Always use your bedside light when getting up at night; if the switch is not easily accessible keep a good torch by the bed.

- > Improve the visibility of anything that you could trip over on or walk into (such as steps or thresholds) by adding clear and bright markings to them.