

SA Falls and Fall Injury Prevention

Information for consumers

MEDICINES AND BALANCE

Manage your medicines to help you stay on your feet.

It is important for everyone to know what medicines they are taking and why. Taking your medicines correctly, when combined with physical activity, will help you to sleep better, stay steady, be independent and enjoy life.

Some medicine can affect your balance

For some people, medicines that are taken for problems sleeping, stress and anxiety, high blood pressure or heart problems can affect balance and increase the risk of falling.

You need to take notice of any unwanted side effects from your medicines, such as:

- > feeling drowsy
- > feeling confused
- > feeling dizzy
- > feeling unsteady
- > being clumsy
- > having blurred vision.

Take particular notice when there has been a change in your medicines, you have a new combination of medicines or a different dosage.

If you notice side effects from your medicines, talk to your **doctor or pharmacist**. Simple changes may solve the problem.

What can you do?

- > Keep an up-to-date list of medicines – all your prescribed and over the counter medications and take this list to any health appointments.
- > Only take your own prescribed medications as directed and consider using a pill box to keep track of when you take them – you can buy these at your local chemist.
- > Check the medicine label. It may advise 'not to be taken with alcohol' or 'take with food'.
- > If your doctor prescribes a new medicine, ask about the possible side effects.
- > Ask for consumer information leaflets about your medication from the pharmacist or your doctor.
- > If your dose has changed, or the medicine is out of date, return them to your pharmacy.





Who can help?

Talk to your **doctor** about:

- > your medicines and their side effects
- > alternatives to taking some medicines, for example, exercise can help to reduce anxiety and improve sleep
- > changing or stopping any of your medicines
- > a referral for a Home Medicine Review – this is a free service where a pharmacist comes to your home to talk about your medicines with you.

- > A **pharmacist** can tell you about your medicine, how to take it and any side effects.
- > **NPS Medicines Line:** 1300 633 424 or www.nps.org.au/consumers
- > **Health Direct:** 1800 022 222 provides 24hr health advice, or visit www.healthdirect.gov.au/medicines
- > **Adverse Medicines Events (AME):** 1300 134 237.



For more information

Please contact your local health service for more information and visit sahealth.sa.gov.au/falls

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*SA Health Partnering with Consumers and Community Advisory



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