

Medication Top Tips



1. Be aware that taking 4 or more medications per day can contribute to falls risk, due to side effects impacting balance.
2. Have an annual medication review. Over time, some medications may no longer be needed and can be safely discontinued. Speak to a GP or pharmacist for advice.
3. Certain medications are known to cause an increased risk of falls. See the box below for a full list of medications that are high risk.
4. Become familiar with the side effects of common medications. It is important to have an awareness of how a certain medication may make someone feel. Some common side effects include; sleepiness, blurred vision, low blood sugar, confusion, dizziness, dehydration and deafness.
5. In addition, ensure all areas identified on the Multifactorial Risk Assessment (MFRA) are appropriately managed, in order to reduce the individual's risks of falling wherever possible. Find the MFRA on the Assessments page on StopFalls webpage.

Visit www.hcpastopfalls.info to find links to the Herts Valleys, East and North Hertfordshire CCG Medication Teams.



Commonly prescribed drugs that can contribute to falls. This list is to raise awareness of most commonly prescribed drugs that can contribute to falls risk. The grading of the drugs has been adapted from the Medicines and Falls in Hospital: Guidance by John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford, March 2011 and approved by the British Geriatrics Society.

High risk	Moderate risk	Lower risk
Can commonly cause falls alone or in combination	Can cause falls, especially in combination	Possibly causes falls, particularly in combination

Drug Name	Common Use	Effects on Falls Risk
Alfluzosin	Benign prostatic hyperplasia	Drop in blood pressure on standing
Amitriptyline	Depression	Drop in blood pressure on standing, drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance
Amlodipine	Hypertension, Angina	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing
Atenolol	Hypertension, Angina, Arrhythmia	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing, slow heart rate
Baclofen	Severe spasticity of voluntary muscle	Sleepiness and reduced muscle tone
Bendroflumethiazide	Oedema, Hypertension	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing and sleepiness
Betahistine	Vertigo, Tinnitus	Sleepiness
Bisoprolol	Hypertension, Angina, Heart failure	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing, slow heart rate
Bumetanide	Oedema	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing
Candesartan	Hypertension, Heart failure	Low blood pressure
Captopril	Hypertension, Heart failure	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing
Carbamazepine	Epilepsy	Sleepiness, slow reactions, unsteadiness and lack of movement control
Carvedilol	Hypertension, Angina, Heart failure	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing, slow heart rate
Chlordiazepoxide	Anxiety, Acute alcohol withdrawal	Drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance
Chlorphenamine	Allergy, Urticaria	Drowsiness and blurred vision
Chlorpromazine	Psychosis	Drop in blood pressure on standing, sleepiness, slow reflexes, loss of balance
Chlorthalidone	Oedema, Hypertension, Heart failure	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing and sleepiness
Cinnarazine	Nausea, Vomiting, Vertigo, Tinnitus	Sleepiness
Citalopram	Depression	Drop in blood pressure on standing, confusion
Clomipramine	Depression, Phobia	Drop in blood pressure on standing, drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance
Clonazepam	Epilepsy	Drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance
Codeine	Pain	Sleepiness, slow reactions, impaired balance, delirium
Dantrolene	Severe spasticity of voluntary muscle	Sleepiness , reduced muscle tone
Diazepam	Insomnia, Anxiety	Drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance
Digoxin	Heart Failure	Slow heart rate
Diltiazem	Hypertension, Angina	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing
Donepezil	Dementia	Fainting
Dosulepin	Depression	Drop in blood pressure on standing, drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance
Doxazosin	Hypertension	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing
Doxepin	Depression, Pruritus in eczema	
Duloxetine	Depression, Anxiety	Drop in blood pressure on standing, sleepiness, dizziness, confusion
Enalapril	Hypertension, Heart failure	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing
Felodipine	Hypertension, Angina	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing
Fluoxetine	Depression	Confusion
Fluphenazine	Psychosis	Drop in blood pressure on standing, sleepiness, slow reflexes, loss of balance
Flurazepam	Insomnia	Drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance
Furosemide	Oedema, Hypertension	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing
Gabapentin	Chronic pain	Drop in blood pressure on standing, sleepiness, unsteadiness
Galantamine	Dementia	Fainting
Glycerol trinitrate (GTN)	Angina	Drop in blood pressure on standing
Haloperidol	Psychosis	Drop in blood pressure on standing, sleepiness, slow reflexes, loss of balance
Hydroxyzine	Pruritus	Drowsiness and blurred vision
Irbesartan	Hypertension	Low blood pressure

Drug Name	Common Use	Effects on Falls Risk
Isosorbide mononitrate	Angina	Drop in blood pressure on standing
Lercanidipine	Hypertension	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing
Lisinopril	Hypertension, Heart failure	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing
Lorazepam	Insomnia, Anxiety	Drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance
Lortemazepam	Insomnia	Drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance
Losartan	Hypertension, Heart failure	Low blood pressure
Metolazone	Oedema, Hypertension	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing and sleepiness
Metoprolol	Hypertension, Angina, Arrhythmia	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing, slow heart rate
Mirtazapine	Depression	Drop in blood pressure on standing, drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance
Morphine	Pain	Sleepiness, slow reactions, impaired balance, delirium
Moxonidine	Hypertension	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing and sleepiness
Nicorandil	Angina	Drop in blood pressure on standing
Nifedipine	Hypertension, Angina	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing
Nitrazepam	Insomnia	Drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance
Nortriptyline	Depression, Neuropathic pain	Drop in blood pressure on standing, drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance
Olanzapine	Psychosis, Agitation	Drop in blood pressure on standing, sleepiness, slow reflexes, loss of balance
Olmesartan	Hypertension	Low blood pressure
Oxazepam	Anxiety	Drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance
Oxybutinin	Urinary incontinence	Drowsiness, dizziness and blurred vision
Paroxetine	Depression	Drop in blood pressure on standing, confusion
Perindopril	Hypertension, Heart failure	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing
Phenobarbital	Epilepsy	Sleepiness, slow reactions, unsteadiness and lack of movement control
Phenytoin	Epilepsy	Unsteadiness and lack of movement control
Pramipexole	Parkinson's disease	Delirium and drop in blood pressure on standing
Prazosin	Hypertension	Drop in blood pressure on standing
Pregabalin	Epilepsy, Neuropathic pain	Sleepiness
Prochlorperazine	Nausea, Vomiting, Vertigo	Movement disorder in long term use
Promethazine	Allergy, Urticaria	Drowsiness and blurred vision
Propranolol	Hypertension, Angina, Arrhythmia	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing, slow heart rate
Quetiapine	Psychosis, Agitation	Drop in blood pressure on standing, sleepiness, slow reflexes, loss of balance
Ramipril	Hypertension, Heart failure	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing
Risperidone	Psychosis, Agitation	Drop in blood pressure on standing, sleepiness, slow reflexes, loss of balance
Rivastigmine	Dementia	Fainting
Ropinirole	Parkinson's disease	Delirium and drop in blood pressure on standing
Selegiline	Parkinson's disease	Drop in blood pressure on standing
Sertraline	Depression	Drop in blood pressure on standing, confusion
Solifenacin	Urinary incontinence	Drowsiness, dizziness and blurred vision
Sotalol	Arrhythmia	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing, slow heart rate
Tamsulosin	Benign prostatic hyperplasia	Drop in blood pressure on standing
Telmisartan	Hypertension	Low blood pressure
Temazepam	Insomnia	Drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance
Timolol eye drops	Glaucoma	Drop in blood pressure on standing, slow heart rate
Tolterodine	Urinary incontinence	Drowsiness, dizziness and blurred vision
Trazodone	Depression, Anxiety	Drop in blood pressure on standing, drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance
Trimipramine	Depression	Drop in blood pressure on standing, drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance
Venlafaxine	Depression	Drop in blood pressure on standing, sleepiness, dizziness, confusion
Verapamil	Hypertension, Angina, Arrhythmia	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing
Zolpidem	Insomnia	Drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance
Zopiclone	Insomnia	Drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance