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### **How can I help reduce healthcare associated infections?**

Infection control is important to the well-being of our patients and for that reason we have infection control procedures in place. Keeping your hands clean is an effective way of preventing the spread of infections. We ask that you, and anyone visiting you, use the hand sanitiser available at the entrance to every ward before coming in to or after leaving the ward. In some situations hands may need to be washed at the sink using soap and water rather than using the hand sanitiser. Staff will let you know if this is the case.

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[www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk](http://www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk)

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## **How will **drinking** fluids prevent me from falling?**

### **Patient information leaflet**

If you require a translation or an alternative format of this leaflet please call the Continence Team on 01296 318648

**Safe & compassionate care,**

**every time**

Older people are much more vulnerable to **dehydration** which can lead to an increased risk of falling.

### **What happens when I am dehydrated?**

Dehydration occurs when your body loses more fluid than it takes in and this can cause several symptoms:-

- Light-headedness
- Dizziness
- Sluggishness/tiredness
- Confusion
- Low Blood Pressure
- Can affect mental functions such as memory, attention, concentration and reaction times.

Any of the symptoms above can raise the risk of falling.

**Did you know 33% of people aged over 65 fall each year? This increases to 50% for people aged over 85.**

**1 in 10 falls in older people results in serious injury e.g. fractured bones.**

Older people often experience a reduced sensation of thirst, so they do not realise they need to drink. Some medications such as diuretics and laxatives may increase the likelihood of dehydration and those who are incontinent may limit their fluid intake.

**We recommend you drink 6-8 cups of fluid each day which includes water, fruit juice, tea, coffee (preferably decaffeinated), and milky drinks.**

‘Wet’ foods such as jelly, blancmange, yogurt and soups are good, as well as fruits and salad vegetables.

**Water helps to keep your urinary tract and kidneys healthy. When fluid intake is reduced the risk of urinary tract infections increases. Urine infections can lead to a risk of falls. Dark coloured urine is a symptom of dehydration.**

Inadequate fluid intake is also one of the most common causes of constipation. Drinking more fluid can increase stool frequency and enhance the beneficial effect of fibre intake.

Good hydration can not only prevent falls, it can also prevent constipation, improve your mood, stimulate your appetite and reduce restlessness and disrupted sleep patterns.

### **Remember:**

- **Have fluid available at all times, take sips regularly.**
- **Ensure water is fresh and palatable.**
- **Have a variety of hot and cold drinks.**
- **Consider more ‘wet’ foods as a way of increasing fluids.**