

# Falls Risk Assessment Tool (FRAT)

**Definition of a Fall** - An event whereby an individual comes to rest on the ground or another lower level with or without loss of consciousness. (NICE 2004)

## Notes for users:

- 1) Complete assessment form below. The more positive factors, the higher the risk for falling.
- 2) If there is a positive response to three or more of the questions on the form, then please see below for guidance for further assessment, referral options and interventions for certain risk factors.
- 3) Some users of the guidance may feel able to undertake further assessment and appropriate interventions at the time of the assessment.
- 4) Consider which referral would be most appropriate given the patient's needs and local resources.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **HCN:** \_\_\_\_\_

	Questions	yes	no
1	Is there a history of any fall in the previous year? <b>How assessed?</b> Ask the person.		
2	Is the patient/client on four or more medications per day? <b>How assessed?</b> Identify number of prescribed medications.		
3	Does the patient/client have a diagnosis of stroke or Parkinson's Disease? <b>How assessed?</b> Ask the patient.		
4	Does the patient/client report any problems with his/her balance? <b>How assessed?</b> Ask the person.		
5	Is the patient/client <b>unable</b> to rise from a chair of knee height? <b>How assessed?</b> Ask the person to stand up from a chair of knee height without using their arms.		

Risk Factor Present	Further Assessment	Referral Options	Interventions
1. History of falling in the previous year.	Review incidents identifying precipitating factors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OT</li> <li>• Physio</li> <li>• Falls Clinic</li> </ul>	Discuss fear of falling and realistic preventative measures.
2. Four or more medications per day.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify types of medication - prescribed and over the counter.</li> <li>• Ask about symptoms of dizziness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GP</li> <li>• Falls Clinic</li> <li>• Pharmacist</li> </ul>	Review medications, particularly sleeping tablets. Discuss changes in sleep patterns normal with aging, and sleep promoting behavioural techniques.
3. Balance and gait problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Can they talk while walking?*</b> Do they sway significantly on standing?</li> <li>• <b>Do basic balance test.**</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physio</li> <li>• Falls Clinic</li> <li>• OT</li> </ul>	Teach about risk. How to manoeuvre safely, effectively and efficiently. Physiotherapy evaluation for range of movement, strength, balance and/or gait exercises. Practice safe transfers. Evaluate for assistive devices/aids. Consider environmental modifications (a) to compensate for disability and to maximise safety, (b) so that daily activities do not require stooping or reaching overhead.
4. Postural hypotension (low blood pressure).	<p>2 readings taken</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. After rest 5 minutes supine</li> <li>2. 1 minute later standing.</li> </ol> <p>Drop in systolic BP <math>\geq 20</math>mmHg and or drop in diastolic <math>\geq 10</math>mmHg or more</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DN</li> <li>• Practice Nurse</li> <li>• GP</li> <li>• Falls Clinic</li> <li>• Pharmacist</li> </ul>	Offer extra pillows or consider raising head of bed if severe. Review medications. Teach to stabilise self after changing position and before walking. Avoid dehydration.

\* While the patient is walking ask them a question but keep walking while you do so. If the patient stops walking either immediately or as soon as they start to answer, they are at higher risk of falling.

\*\* The patient stands between the assessor and the examination couch (or something they can safely hold on to). First assess if the person sways significantly (raises arms or compensates foot placement) while standing freely. Then ask the person to take their weight on to one leg and try to lift the other foot off the floor by about an inch (allow a few practice attempts).