**APPENDIX:** Summary of the content included in the 12 weekly educational brochures provided to the participants.

*NOTE:* The information summarized below was presented in 12 full-color educational brochures that were accompanied by illustrations supporting the information provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Background</th>
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</table>
| 1    | Fall-Proofing the Home | We spend a lot of time in our homes and many of us feel confident and safe in this environment. However, research shows that 60% of the falls experienced by older adults occur in and around their homes. Given this point, there appears to be a need to make a few minor changes to our home environments to reduce hazards and minimize the risk of having a fall. | **Structural Hazards** Some features of your home could potentially pose a hazard to you, but some carefully considered changes or additions may improve home safety:  
- Keep your home well maintained to reduce clutter and limit trip hazards  
- Clean any spills up immediately. Any liquid on the floor could become a slipping hazard  
- Re-hang the bathroom and toilet doors so they open outwards. That way someone can easily reach you if you do happen to fall  
- Does your daily routine include a morning coffee or tea? If so, make sure everything you need is located near the kettle in a convenient place between waist and shoulder height. By doing this, you will limit the amount of traveling you need to do and reduce the need to bend down low or reach up high; both of which can challenge your balance and cause a fall  
**Lighting**  
- Ensuring your home is well illuminated can help to reduce the likelihood of falls  
- Leave a light on in areas you may travel to during the night (e.g. the bathroom or the kitchen)  
- Mark the edges of obstacles, such as stairs, with bright tape can make them easier to detect and potential reduce tripping risk  
- Install net curtains or blinds in your windows to reduce glare  
- Avoid heavily patterned floor coverings as small obstacles or the edges of steps may “blend in”  
- Relocate anything outside the home that casts a shadow across your walkways or footpaths | 1 |
| 2    | Mindset | Recent research has shown that for up to 1 hour following significant emotional stress, older individuals are at a 20.6% | To help calm your mind:  
- Create space to relax and reduce interruptions/distractions | 2, 3 |
higher risk of experiencing a fall and sustaining a subsequent hip or pelvic fracture. Furthermore, being fearful of falling can increase one's risk of experiencing a fall, which inadvertently adds to their emotional stress. Reducing stress and maintaining confidence in your balance may help to reduce your risk of falling and of sustaining a potential injury.

- Sit or lie with your body supported
- Close your eyes and focus on breathing
- Breathe in and out in a slow rhythmic fashion for 5-10 minutes
- Do things that you enjoy like reading, listening to music or watching your favorite television show
- Exercise can also be beneficial for reducing stress. Try joining a gym, walking or picking up a hobby that requires physical activity, such as gardening or lawn bowls

### Sleep

Research has shown that the amount of sleep that one gets at night can influence their risk of falling. In fact, evidence suggests that people who sleep less than 5 hours each night are at a higher risk of falling than those who sleep 7 or more hours a night. We all have those nights where we find it difficult to sleep or are woken quite easily, but finding ways to minimise these episodes may be important for falls prevention. According to research, prolonged periods of poor sleep can have a negative impact on an individual’s health and increase their risk of falls.

- Where possible, turn off your mobile and/or house phone and other devices to limit the risk of distractions while you sleep
- Caffeine is a stimulant and, therefore, can assist with keeping you awake. To improve your chances of a good night’s sleep, avoid consuming caffeinated drinks 4 to 6 hours before bed
- Turn your bedroom into a sleep-inducing environment. Keep it quiet, dark and cool to help improve your sleep quality
- Establishing a soothing pre-sleep routine can help you sleep. Reading, watching television or listening to music are just a couple of things that may be helpful
- There are many herbal supplements that may help improve sleep quality. Speak with your doctor about natural remedies that may assist with promoting good sleep health

### Vision

As we age, our vision can decline, making it more difficult to detect and avoid obstacles in our environment. Research shows that declines in visual function are associated with an increased risk of falling. Understanding these changes and routinely having your eyes tests can help to minimise the risk associated with poor vision.

#### Testing
- With time, our vision changes. Having your vision checked at least once every two years will help detect any changes and allow corrections to be made to preserve your visual acuity
- Bifocals can increase the risk of falling, as the lower (reading) part of the lens can distort an individual’s vision when scanning for obstacles at the ground level. Switching to a single lens glass when outside may help minimise the risk of tripping

#### Lighting

As we age our eyes take longer to adjust to rapid changes in illumination, are more sensitive to glare and less able to judge distance and depth.
- When moving from light to dark environments, pause briefly
<table>
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<th>Page</th>
<th>Nutrition and Medication</th>
<th>Nutrition and Health</th>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Do you feel like it takes a while for your medication to ‘kick in’ or, sometimes, that your medication seems to have no effect at all? The types of food that you eat and the timing that they are consumed relative to your anti-parkinsonian medications can influence the absorption of your medication. By understanding how foods and your medications interact, it may be possible to improve the management of your symptoms.</td>
<td>It is often considered that Parkinson’s disease is a condition that affects only one’s movements, but many people living with this condition also experience debilitating non-motor symptoms that may include malnutrition and digestive problems.</td>
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|      | • Taking your medication with meals may help reduce unwanted side effects, such as nausea, but can reduce the effectiveness of your medication.  
• Meals high in protein (e.g. chicken) may compete with certain medications for absorption. To maximise the benefit of your medication, check with your neurologist to determine the best types of foods to consume when taking your medication.  
• Try eating an hour before or 30 minutes after taking your medication. Food in the stomach can delay the absorption of levodopa. Ask your neurologist for more information about the best times to eat within your standard medication schedule  
• Before starting any nutritional or herbal supplement, always check with your neurologist or pharmacist to ensure that the new supplement will not compete with your medications. | • Some people with Parkinson’s disease can experience difficulties with swallowing. Speech pathologists may be able to provide specific individual advice and treatment that can help to improve swallowing difficulties  
• A balanced diet including all of the food groups is important for overall health and may include items from all 5 food groups (i.e. grains, fruits, vegetables, meats and sweets)  
• Try to maintain 25-30 calories per kilogram of body mass. If you experience dyskinesias, additional caloric intake may be beneficial; however, you should always check with your doctor before making significant changes to your diet  
• For balanced nutrition, try to eat a ratio of 4-5 grams of carbohydrates (such as pasta and breads) to each 1 gram of |
| 7  | Exercise for Health | Physical inactivity is a risk factor for cardiovascular disease as well as other chronic diseases, such as diabetes mellitus, cancer, obesity, hypertension and osteoporosis. The good news is that we can modify this risk by increasing our activity levels. We often think of exercise as being particularly strenuous and unpleasant, but even small changes in physical fitness provide a significant decrease in risk of mortality. In fact, exercise and physical activity has been shown to decrease relative risk of death by about 20-35%!
Whether you like to run, cycle, go to the gym or walk the dog, increasing your weekly exercise or physical activity will be beneficial for your overall health. |
| 8  | Exercise to Prevent Falls | Systematic evidence suggests that exercise-based interventions that include moderate to more challenging balance and walking tasks are effective at reducing the rate of fall in older adults. Like any skill, balance can be improved via practice and/or specific physical training that challenges your stability. Some common instructor-led exercise types that promote well-being and balance, include Tai Chi, yoga and pilates. |

- Fibre and fluids (6-8 glasses of water per day) are helpful with managing constipation. Some fibre sources include breads, cereals, vegetables and fruits that still have their skin
- By consuming 1000-1500 mg of calcium per day, it may be possible to maintain healthy bones and minimise the risk of fractures. Some great sources of calcium are dairy products, such as milk and cheese
- Some types of broad beans are known to contain levodopa which may help with symptom management. However, large amounts of levodopa can cause unwanted side effects, so speak with your doctor about them.

Increasing the regularity of your exercise, will help to:
- Reduce stress and maintain a positive mindset. When we exercise, our body releases special types of chemical, known as endorphins. These chemicals make us feel great!
- Maintain and/or improve muscle strength and endurance. While most activities of daily life do not require incredible strength, improvements in muscle strength and endurance can make performing these tasks much easier. Furthermore, maintaining muscular fitness has been shown to be an important factor in maintaining one’s independence.
- Before commencing any new form of exercise-based intervention, it is important to speak with your doctor to ensure that any risks to your health are accounted for

- By regularly completing exercise sessions that incorporate elements of Tai Chi, stepping practice, directional changes, dance steps and/or catching and throwing a ball, you may improve your balance and reduce your falls risk by up to 40%
- Continuous exercises, such as walking, running or cycling are good for cardiovascular health, but activities that challenge your stability and target improvements in core strength and endurance are most likely to improve balance
- If you feel your balance is poor, it is advisable to practice improving your balance with another person for safety
- Before commencing any exercise program, you should always
| 9 | **Trip and Slip Prevention** | **Slipping**

The walking surfaces inside and outside our homes are often much slipperier than they appear. Here are some ways that you might be able to reduce the risk associated with walking on slippery surfaces:
- When using the bath or shower, consider placing a non-slip mat under your feet
- To assist with safe entry and exit from the bath or shower, consider installing a handrail. This can also be useful if you need to bend down to wash your feet and legs
- Where possible, avoid applying talcum powder on tiles, vinyl, or wooden floors

**Tripping**

Objects lying on or close to the floor are potentially trip hazards and may cause a fall. To reduce such hazards, you might consider:
- Remove any unnecessary clutter from walkways, both inside and outside the home
- Ensure that all electric cables are tucked away under or behind furniture
- Secure mats and rugs to the floor with double sided tape to prevent them sliding or folding over and creating trip hazard

**Footwear**

Your choice of shoes can influence your risk of slipping, tripping or stumbling. By considering the following, you may be able to minimise this risk and prevent future falls:
- Choose comfortable, firm-fitting, flat shoes with good grip and a low broad heel. Shoes that have prominent heels can reduce the ability of your foot to detect the surface you are walking on and increase the risk of overbalance
- Avoid walking in socks or wearing poorly fitted slippers around the house. While walking in socks may pose a slipping risk, loose socks and/or slippers may also pose a tripping risk
- If foot problems make it difficult for you to find suitable shoes, consider asking a podiatrist about specialist shoe stores

speak with your physician to see whether it will benefit you

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Vitamin D

Ever wondered how you can build and maintain strong bones? It is widely publicised that calcium is important for good bone health, but the absorption of dietary sources of calcium rely upon adequate levels of vitamin D. Without sufficient amounts of vitamin D, people can be consuming enough calcium-rich foods, but still be at an increased risk of developing osteoporosis! It is recommended that adults consume about 600 IU (15 µg) of vitamin D and around 1000 mg of calcium per day.

Daily vitamin D requirements can be met by:
- Consuming food sources rich in vitamin D
- Taking a dietary supplement
- Synthesising it from exposure to sunlight

The following list of foods are known to contain vitamin D:
- Herring
- Mackerel
- Liver
- Eggs

To synthesise your daily vitamin D requirements from the sun, Osteoporosis Australia suggests that people living in Northern Australia require the following exposure to sunlight; preferably between 10am and 2pm:

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<th>Winter</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fairer skin</td>
<td>6-7 minutes</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darker skin</td>
<td>20-45 minutes</td>
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Multi-Tasking

We all have busy schedules and sometimes we are required to multi-task to get everything done. However, research shows that when we multi-task, our divided focus of attention can reduce our balance and increase our risk of falling. For example, if you are ascending a flight of steps while speaking with a friend or family member, you may be at a greater risk of tripping than if you were focusing entirely on negotiating the staircase. By avoiding situations that will require you to multi-task, it may be possible to reduce your risk of falling.

Engaging in a mental task (e.g. talking) while performing a motor task (e.g. carrying a hot cup of tea) may impair stability and increase the risk of falling. To limit this risk, you might try:
- Focusing on completing one task at a time to limit the need for multi-tasking
- Reduce the difficulty of the secondary task to make it more manageable (e.g. fill the cup of tea to ¾ full to reduce the risk of spilling)
- When performing multiple tasks, try to adopt a “posture first” strategy. What this means is, you should try to prioritise maintaining stability. Your safety is always more important than spilling a little of your tea

Foot Care

We all lead busy lives and being on our feet for many hours each day can lead to foot problems and foot pain; both of which can affect balance and increase the risk of falls. The prevalence of foot problems become increasingly more common with increased age and research shows that up to 80% of older adults are living with at least one foot pathology. Some common foot problems that If you have pain, swelling, tingling or pins and needles in your feet or if your feet begin to change shape, a podiatrist may be able to help improve your symptoms. Typical treatments for common foot problems include:
- Bunions are often treated non-invasively and relief can be experienced by wearing wider shoes or placing pads over the

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People may experience include hallux valgus (also known as bunions), calluses (also known as corns) and other toe deformities. Affected area to reduce pressure and/or friction. In the early stages, stretching of the Achilles tendon may also help.

- Corns can be treated with medically-proven topical products that help to dissolve the corn and reduce its size.
- Toe deformities, such as ‘hammer-toe’ can be treated with simple taping or a commercially available hammer toe sling; both of which seek to realign the toe.
- While it is generally considered a last resort, some foot problems may require surgical intervention. If you have foot problems that affect your comfort, balance or mobility, you should speak with your doctor to determine your options.

Sources: