# What is Fear of Falling?

Fear of falling is a persistent feeling of being at risk from falling during one or more daily activities. Evidence suggests that people may be more susceptible to a fear of falling if they have one of more of the following associated risk factors:

A history of falls
Poor health status
Frailty
Long term physical health conditions such as stroke, Parkinson's disease and rheumatoid arthritis.

Functional decline
Poor strength
Impaired gait (manner of walking)
Reduced leaning balance

The Role of Anxiety

If we get anxious about falling we often start avoiding things, which is understandable in the short term. However, in the long-term, avoiding things keeps the anxiety going as we never learn we can cope with doing things.
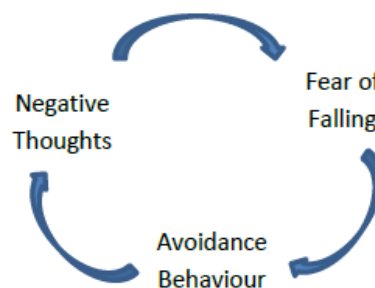
Avoiding doing things also means that our bodies lose strength, balance and fitness, which actually makes us more likely to fall again.
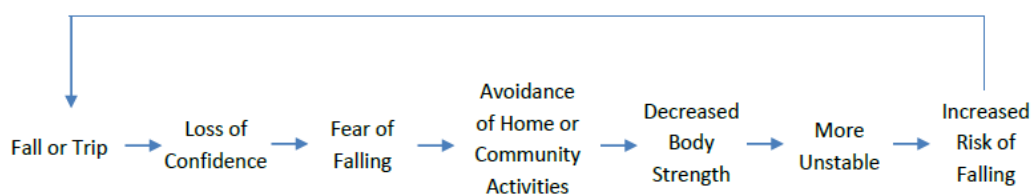
So, it is important to keep doing things whenever possible even though we feel anxious. It's important to not overdo it, though- there may be times it is sensible to not engage in highly risky behaviours, e.g. avoiding walking on an icy pavement. Someone who is not feeling anxious would probably avoid this too.