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Don't let nutrition fail you this April Falls Day

Health experts are promoting the power of good nutrition and proper hydration to prevent falls this April Falls Day, 1 April.

Dr Friedbert Kohler, the South Western Sydney Local Health District's Director of Aged Care and Rehabilitation, said eating a balanced diet and drinking plenty water was something that could fall away as people aged.

"Particularly if older people live alone, they may lose the desire or the ability to prepare healthy food for themselves and ensure they are drinking enough water," he said.

"Older people might also have difficulties chewing, swallowing or using cutlery, or they may even forget to eat and drink, and this can stop them from getting proper nutrition and hydration."

Dr Kohler said older people who were malnourished or dehydrated were at greater risk of falls, hip fractures, osteoporosis and any wounds could take longer to heal.

Dementia and mental confusion are also risk factors for falls and people who have these conditions are more likely to be malnourished and dehydrated.

"Not only is proper nutrition important for physical and mental wellbeing, but it also helps maintain a healthy muscle mass," he said.

Exercise was also important for preventing falls, Dr Kohler said, even something as simple as walking or Tai Chi.

"Basic exercises that focus on strength and balance can reduce a person's risk of falling," he said.

"We recommend people join exercise groups so they can get the benefits of organised exercise along with the social benefits of being a part of a group."

For more information on falls prevention visit www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au and click on the April Falls Day 2018 link.