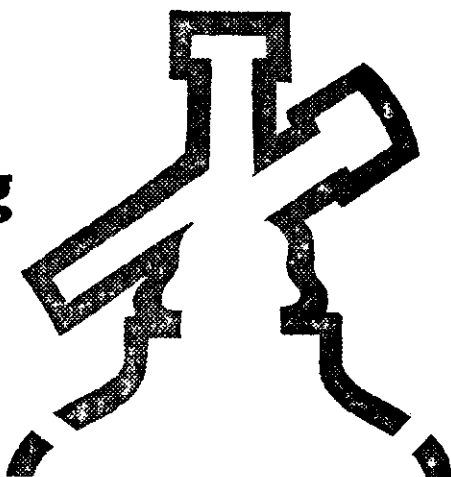


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Accidents in the Home

WHEN baby falls on the head, or toddler bangs his head hard, you are often in doubt about any damage that may have been done. There will be no queries if there is unconsciousness, for you will hurry the child to hospital. If the blow or fall is a hard one, and the child is very drowsy, pale for some hours, not wanting to eat, call your doctor. If, on the other hand, baby stops crying within a quarter of an hour, is not pale, and doesn't vomit, the chances are he is perfectly all right. He may want to sleep. Let him, but wake him after a while to make sure he is just asleep and not unconscious. Swellings come up quickly on baby and toddler heads after falls — big, puffy ones. These lumps are of no moment, provided the colour stays good, and there's no vomiting, or excessive drowsiness. After a night's sleep following a fall, if a toddler says his head aches or if he vomits, you should call your doctor. He may suggest an X-ray.

Falls are responsible for almost half the accidents in New Zealand homes. In a recent year 2952 accidents requiring hospital treatment arose from falls on polished floors, over loose mats, or objects lying on floors, over cats, or on frosty paths. Tumbling from a higher to a lower place took another 1213 to hospital. For every time a man fell 151 women fell. New Zealand women, aren't you being a bit careless?

The majority of women reap their tumbles as they go about their housewifery, on the stairs, in the kitchen or back garden. It's a story of highly-polished floors, loose rugs, articles or toys not properly put away, of trying to carry too much down stairs at once, or of badly lit stairs, passages and halls. It's a story of reaching for things high up from edges of chairs, or from improperly opening and placing step-ladders. Falls far outrank other types of accidents, and stairs and steps are culprits more than anything else, either from poor lighting or poor repair, or from slipping rugs or mats at the bottom, or from leaving household cleaning things or toys on them.

Falls increase as we get older, with women always getting the worse of the bargain. Toddlers and pre-school children are inclined to fall out of windows or off porches, or beds or cots. School-children are more venturesome and tumble off swings, trees, fences and roofs. Stairs and steps take toll more in grown-up ages, after 25 years. Accidental falls as you walk around, on the same level, increase with age. These are mostly from carelessness — things left around, spilt water or grease not wiped up, curled up edges of linoleum or rugs, slippery rugs or mats, or even from new shoes or shoes needing repair. Loose nails or splinters in the floor have been the cause of many a fall. A baby fell from its mother's arms when she tripped over the carpet edge hurrying from bedroom to kitchen.

Keep your home safe for yourself and for your little boy and girl. Your home

This is the text of a talk broadcast recently from ZB, YA and YZ stations of the NZBS by DR. H. B. TURBOTT, Deputy-Director-General of Health

shouldn't be a hazard. Falls are taking up too many hospital beds. Do you always hold baby's wrist or ankle when he's on any surface from which he can fall? If you have stairs in the house, do you always grasp the rail with one hand while carrying baby up and down stairs? Do you keep the stairs free from toys and any clutter of any kind, and put the light on when you use them at night? Do you keep the children away from open windows or else have them guarded? In your bedroom is there a light near the bed or the door, so that you needn't walk and trip in the dark? Do you immediately clean up any kitchen spillings of water, food

or fat? Do you always use a steady, strong pair of steps or stepladder when getting things from your high shelves? And instead of having some of your often used things up high, why don't you have all common articles readily accessible? Are the children made to put toys away after use? Do you leave things about yourself? Are your stairs well lit? Do your mats and rugs have non-skid backing, and no polish underneath?

All little things! All to be looked to, unless, womenfolk, you want to go on falling 151 times more than men!



N.P.S. photograph

JESSIE McLENNAN, formerly Women's Session Organiser for the Commercial Division of the NZBS, who has written a series of travel talks, "England in Retrospect." These are now being heard from 4ZB in Tuesday's Women's Hour and will shortly be heard from other Commercial stations

N.Z. LISTENER, MAY 13, 1955.