

How Seeing or Hearing About Others Falling Affects Older Adults' Worries About Falling

Thank you for considering taking part in this research study survey online. Without the input of participants like yourself, we would not be able to make constructive changes from research results to try to improve how we do things in the future. We appreciate your interest in this study about how seeing or hearing about other people falling might affect older adults' concerns about falling.

What am I being asked to do?

You are being invited to take part in a research project. The study is looking at how seeing or hearing about other people falling might influence worries about falling in older adults. To take part, you need to be aged 60 or over, living independently in the community, able to read and understand English, and able to walk at least 10 meters on your own (with or without a walking aid). If you agree to take part, you will be asked to complete an online survey that will take about 15–20 minutes. The survey asks about your experiences with falls, any concerns you may have about falling, and your everyday activities. You will also be asked whether you would like to take part in a 6-month follow-up survey to track changes over time. Please read the rest of this information carefully so that you understand what participation involves, including any potential risks and benefits.

Who should I contact if I would like to speak to someone first in person?

If you would like to speak to someone in person or ask questions about the study before deciding to take part, you can contact the Principal Researcher:

Dr. Mathew Hill, Lecturer in Psychology, University of Leicester

E-mail: mwh20@le.ac.uk

What is it I am being asked to be involved in?

You are being asked to take part in a short online survey about falls and concerns about falling in older adults. The survey should take about 15–20 minutes to complete. You do not need any special knowledge or experience to take part. If you choose, you can also agree to take part in a follow-up survey in 6 months, which will ask similar questions to see how things may have changed over time. All questions are about your experiences, thoughts, and feelings related to falls and everyday activities. You can skip any questions you do not wish to answer.

Who can take part?

You have been invited to participate because you are aged 60 years or older, live independently in the community (not in residential care or assisted living), and are able to walk at least 10 meters on your own, with or without a walking aid. You cannot take part if you have a progressive neurological condition (e.g., Parkinson's disease, dementia, multiple sclerosis) or an orthopaedic condition that makes walking difficult (e.g., lower-limb amputation). If you do not meet the criteria above, we thank you for reading about our research, but please do not continue with the survey.

Do I have to take part?

Participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You do not have to take part, and deciding not to participate will not affect you in any way. If you do choose to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time before submitting your survey. If you withdraw before submitting, any

information you have provided will not be saved. Once you have submitted the survey, your responses will be anonymised, and it will not be possible to remove your data from the study.

What are the data protection safeguards of the overall study-design?

This study complies with the General Data Protection Regulation Act known as GDPR (2018) in the UK. This means that you will see a Yes and No box at the end of this introduction page to the survey. It invites you to tick whether you would like to be involved in the study or not. Tick 'yes' if you would like to complete the survey, and tick 'no', if you would prefer not to. If you are a someone based overseas, outside the UK, who is taking part in the research survey then all the data you provide online will come into the legal jurisdiction of GDPR (2018), regardless of where you presently live. This is to ensure that the study comes under the legal remit of data protection at the University of Leicester. Our duty is to maintain the security and confidentiality of your research answers. We do this by anonymising your responses and keeping the survey materials on the University of Leicester shared hard-drive for a period not exceeding 6 years. We will maintain a data deletion register and destroy all data in 6 years' time on 5th March, 2032.

What will happen to any data that I provide?

We will collect limited personal data for the purposes of this study. Specifically, the only identifiable data we will collect is your email address, if you choose to provide it for the 6-month follow-up survey. Your IP address will not be stored. All survey responses will be anonymous and stored in a password-protected electronic file on University of Leicester secure servers. These responses may be used in academic publications, conference presentations, reports, and summary materials about the study. Identifiable information, such as email addresses, will be stored separately from survey responses and will be deleted or anonymised after the follow-up survey has been completed. All research data will be stored securely for 6 years, after which it will be destroyed on 5 March 2032. Because this study is hosted online, your responses may be transferred to, stored, or processed outside the UK, but all data will remain under the legal jurisdiction of GDPR (2018) and handled according to University of Leicester policies to ensure confidentiality and security.

Who will have access to my data?

The University of Leicester is the data controller for this study, meaning it is responsible for how your personal data is used and stored. The University will process your personal data solely for the purposes of this research, which is carried out in the public interest. Only the Principal Investigator (Dr. Matt Hill) will have access to any personal data, specifically email addresses you provide for the optional 6-month follow-up. These email addresses will be stored separately from your survey responses to maintain anonymity. Your anonymised survey responses may be used by the University for academic publications, conference presentations, reports, and future research. Identifying information will be removed before any data is shared with other researchers or made publicly available.

Who has reviewed the research project?

This project has been reviewed by an appropriate ethics committee at the University of Leicester, the application number is: 5620

Contact for Further Information

If you have any questions about this study or would like more information before deciding to take part, you can contact:

Principal Researcher: Dr Matt Hill

Department: School of Psychology and Vision Sciences

Email: mwh20@le.ac.uk

Who to contact if you have any concerns or if I want to make a complaint

If you have any concerns or queries about the way in which this research project has been conducted, or if you wish to make a complaint, you can contact:

Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee

Email: ethics@le.ac.uk

Data Protection Contact Information

If you require more data protection information then you can access this via the University's Information Assurance Services:

Information Assurance Services

University of Leicester

University Road

Leicester

LE1 7RH

T: +44 (0)116 229 7945

E: ias@le.ac.uk

W: <https://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ias/>

Consent Statements

Please note that you may only participate in this survey if you are aged 60 years or over.

I certify that I am 60 years of age or over.

If you have read the information above and agree to participate, with the understanding that the data (including any personal data) you submit will be processed accordingly and in line with UK GDPR, please tick the box below to agree and continue:

Yes, I agree to take part

Thank you for taking the time to read this information and for considering taking part in our study. Your contribution is greatly appreciated and will help us improve understanding in this area.