

Hip Protectors

Hip protectors are products designed to reduce the risk of serious hip injuries from falls. The hip protector is a cup-shaped plastic shield that sits over the hip joint to protect it in the event of a fall. The shield is made of a durable plastic, designed and tested to withstand the impact from a fall. These plastic shields protect the hip by diverting the force of an impact away from the hip joint and onto the surrounding soft tissue.

The protective shields are inserted into specially-designed undergarments. These undergarments can be unisex or gender-specific, are most usually made of cotton, and can be easily cared for as they are washing machine and clothes dryer safe. Easily worn underneath the clothing, these undergarments are virtually undetectable. Hip protectors will only add approximately 1/2 a centimeter to a person's figure (1/4 inch).



Wearing hip protectors is not a guarantee against sustaining a hip fracture from a fall. However, wearing hip protectors reduces the risk of such fractures by 84%. This represents a significant reduction in the amount of hip fractures caused by falls among older people. This is good news, as an estimated 14% of women and 6% of men will suffer a hip fracture at some stage in their later years.

The uptake of hip protectors could therefore reduce these statistics dramatically, and provide confidence and protection to older people.

Hip protectors are available in Tasmania through Tasmanian Medical Supplies. Prices range from \$84.05 per pair with the protective shields sewn in, to \$89.50 per pair with removable shields. Orders can be placed with Tasmanian Medical Supplies by phoning (03) 6234 9777. Alternatively, interstate suppliers are accessible through mail order. For more information on interstate suppliers please contact the Independent Living Centre Tasmania on (03) 6334 5899.

For general product information please see www.hiprotector.com or www.hipshelp.com. For research information please see <http://members.ozemail.com.au/~hipsaver> for results of a study conducted on hip protector effectiveness and uptake in Australia.