

Calvary Community Care

Preparing For A Fall At Home

Falls and Injury Prevention – How not to fall for it



It is worth thinking about how to get help in an emergency, how to get up from the floor, and what to do after a fall.

A good plan will involve both how to call for help and how the help will get to you.

Discuss your plan with someone trusted. Involve family and/or friends and neighbours in your plans so they know what you have done, how they can help, and what they may need to do for you in the event of an emergency. This will help you feel more confident and empowered.

Calling for Help

- You could arrange with a relative, friend, or neighbour to contact them at a certain time each day to ensure all is well. Make sure you carry a cordless or mobile phone on a belt clip or in a pocket, with pre-programmed numbers.
- Consider getting a personal alert system so attention can be attracted quickly in an emergency, such as a fall e.g. Autodiallers - pendant worn around the neck, and linked to the telephone which, when activated, automatically dials certain pre-programmed numbers until it gets an answer. Monitored emergency call system - the most common system is a 24-hour monitored response service or personal alarm. Ensure you wear the pendant or bracelet at all times (except in the shower).
- Intercom systems - such as monitors or two-way intercoms between houses/flats.
- Neighbour-to-neighbour alarms - sirens and flashing lights outside the house or in a neighbour's home, activated by a pendant or wristband transmitter.
- Telstra Delayed Hotline - automatic connection to a relative's or friend's number when the telephone receiver is removed. Telecross - a daily phone call from a Red Cross volunteer.
- Person-to-person alarms - one person carries the transmitter and the other carries the receiver.
- Portable alarms - anything that makes a noise, for example a whistle, bell or battery-operated alarm.

How The Help Will Get To You

The person who comes to help you needs to be able to get in. Leave a spare key with a friend, neighbour or relative who lives nearby. Perhaps have a key in a combination locked box outside.

Advice If You Do Fall

- Remain calm, stay positive and assess the situation.
- Check to see if you have injuries.
- Decide whether or not you can get up safely.
- Think about how you will get up. If you don't manage the first time, rest before trying again.
- Seek medical attention if you are hurt.

Can You Get Up Safely?



I CAN'T Get Up Safely

1. Get somebody's attention - call for help
2. Press your personal alarm
3. Make a loud noise
4. Try and reach for the phone and/or
5. Slide or crawl to the front door and/or
6. Make sure you conserve your energy and lie quietly until help arrives
7. Use pillows or blankets within reach to stay comfortable and warm
8. Once help has arrived make sure your doctor is also informed that you have fallen.



I CAN Get Up Safely

1. Roll onto your side and push up onto your hands and knees.
2. Use stable furniture to help yourself sit up.
3. Stand up slowly and safely (See pictures/instructions on next page)
4. Make sure you rest. Tell someone you have fallen and see your doctor.

Also:

- if outside, try sliding or crawling to shelter and try to move out of direct sunlight and off hot paving
- change position, if possible, from time to time to take pressure off a part of your body
- if possible, drink to prevent dehydration.

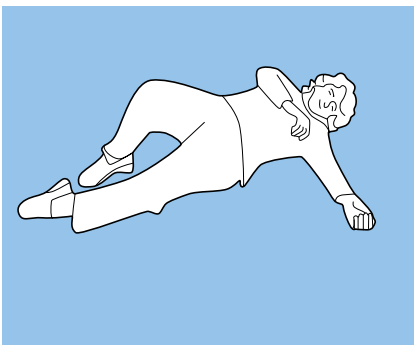
Need support? Calvary Community Care can support safe, independent living at home with a variety of services and expert advice. Call 1300 66 00 22 for more information.

What to do After a Fall:

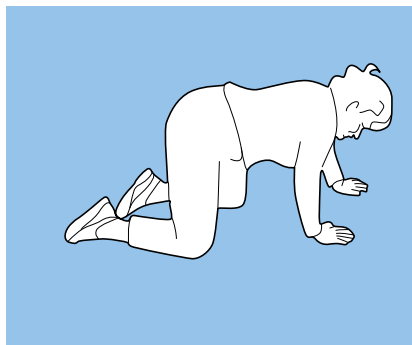
- Write down the details of the fall - time of day you fell, what you were doing and how you were feeling just before the fall.
- Seek urgent medical help if you start to feel confused, develop a bad headache, nausea and vomiting, blurry vision, limb weakness, neck stiffness, feeling tired or having no energy after the fall.
- Advise your daily contact person about the fall. Stay in contact frequently as injuries may not show up straight away.
- Talk to your health professional so you can work together to prevent future falls, maintaining your independence and confidence.
- Tell the doctor or health professional about the fall as soon as possible after it happened, (even if no injuries as they may present later). This is particularly important if you are on blood thinners. Your doctor can investigate possible causes and treatment options.

How to get up from the floor by yourself if you're not injured

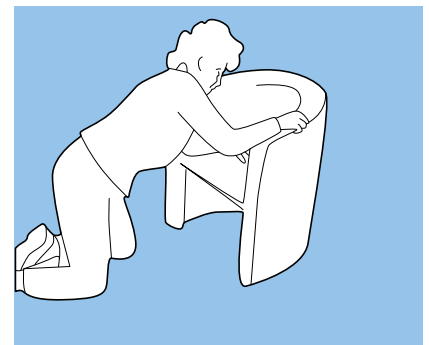
If it might be a long time since you tried getting down on the floor and back up again. It's a good idea to practice this, with someone on standby, so you're confident about getting up by yourself.



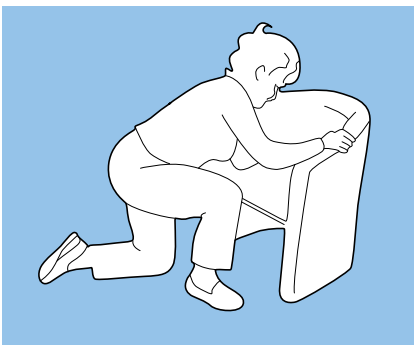
1. Roll onto your side.



2. Get onto hands and knees and crawl or slide to a sturdy piece of furniture i.e. chair, stairs or rail.



3. From a kneeling position, put arms up onto the furniture.



4. Bring one knee forward, putting that foot on the floor.



5. Push up with your arms and legs, pivot your bottom around.



6. Sit down. Rest before trying to move.

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Who can help?

CCC local service centre can assist you to get an alarm or pendant.

Your doctor can refer you to other health professionals or any services for which you may be eligible. A Medication Review can also be undertaken, free of charge, to see if any of your medications are causing issues. (See also Balance and Medicines’.)

Physiotherapist or Occupational

Therapist can help to develop a falls plan and talk about other ways to prevent falls e.g. balance classes. (See also ‘Dizziness and Loss of Balance.’)

Exercise physiologists specialise in the benefits of exercise to help patients get fitter for all around good health, or to treat patients with a medical condition through exercise. They are not personal trainers. They study at university and have a wide range of knowledge about the human body and the benefit that exercise has on it, both mentally and physically.

My Aged Care gives you access to a range of information and support which can be delivered to you in your home. It is for people 65yrs+, or 50yrs+ for an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.

www.myagedcare.gov.au or ph. 1800 200 422.

Yellow Pages under ‘Alerting Systems’

Independent Living Centre provides information about products and services to help people remain independent and improve their quality of life.

<http://ilcaustralia.org.au/> or ph. 1300 885 886.

References

Revised and re-published by the Commonwealth of Australia 2011

‘Don’t Fall For It – A guide to preventing falls for older people’

<http://bit.ly/2oSBy4k>

SA Falls and Injury Prevention Fact Sheet 7

‘Standing up to Falls’

<http://bit.ly/2ozCGOx>

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