

# How do I get up from the floor after a fall

## An advice leaflet for Amputees

As an amputee you are at an increased risk of falling. Falls are caused by lots of different reasons. You may prevent falling by:

- Being aware that the feeling of your phantom limb or foot may cause you to fall.
- Looking at your house/flat and making sure there is good lighting, no loose rugs, no uneven or wet flooring, no trailing flexes and that there is not too much clutter.
- Making sure you eat a healthy balanced diet.
- Ensuring you drink enough water (you should drink 6 cups of liquid a day)
- Limiting your alcohol intake.
- Making sure you keep active as inactivity leads to weak muscles and poor balance.
- Making sure you don't hurry – especially to the toilet.
- Making sure your eyes are regularly tested and use glasses as prescribed.
- Making sure the tablets you are on are regularly checked.
- Placing the most frequently used items in an easy to reach place.
- If you have high blood pressure get it checked regularly.

It is important that you know what you should do in the event of a fall. Follow the instructions and remember if you can't get up it's very important to keep warm, keep comfortable, keep moving.

### Walking Aids

- Keep a check on wear of rubber ferrules on sticks, crutches or frames. They should have grooves and NOT be smooth in appearance.
- Be careful where you leave your walking aid – it could be tripped over.
- Do not use another person's walking aid – it may not be suitable for you.

### Wheelchair Use

- Make sure that if you need it, your wheelchair is easily accessible at night.
- Do make sure you put your wheelchair brakes on when getting in and out of your wheelchair.

### Footwear

- Wear shoes/ slippers that are comfortable, fit properly and have non-slip soles.
- Avoid using your prosthesis bare foot.
- Speak to your prosthetist or physiotherapist if changing your shoes to a different heel height.

## **Outside**

- Take extra care when walking on sloping, uneven, wet or icy ground.
- It may be helpful to use a walking aid outside, even if you do not need one indoors. Talk to your physiotherapist.

## **Other**

- Make sure your artificial limb is checked at the centre regularly (once per year)

## **What to do if I fall?**

**Do inform GP or health professional of the fall.** Rest and recover

**Am I hurt?** No - Can I get up from the floor? Yes – Then do so using the easiest method for you as shown in this leaflet.

**Can I get up from the floor?** No – Then follow the comfort plan

**Attract attention** - Keep the telephone on a low table, use pendant alarm, shout/bang on wall

**Keep warm** – Cover yourself with clothing, tablecloth, rug etc.

**Get comfortable** – find a nearby pillow or place an item of clothing under your head.

**Keep moving** – Keep rolling and moving position so not to get pressure sores unless you think you may have an injury.

## **Advice on how to get up off the floor**

### **Method 1**

If you are wearing a below knee prosthesis then you are advised to get up from the floor in the following way:



1. Stay calm. Get your breath back first.



2. When you are ready roll to one side.



3. Rest and inform your doctor if you have any injuries or pain.

## General Advice

- Contact your prosthetist so that your artificial limb can be checked if necessary.
- If you notice problems e.g. damage to your skin, pain (in a joint) – make an appointment to see your GP.
- If your fall has affected your walking please contact your Limb Fitting Centre physiotherapist or consultant.

## Alternative - Method 2

If you find the other way of getting up too difficult, have painful knees or you are not wearing a prosthesis you may find it easier to get up from the floor in the following way.



1. Sit on the floor and rest, shuffle on your bottom to a footstool, pile of cushions or a step. Put your hands up on to the step and lift your body up onto the step. Be careful not to scrape your back.



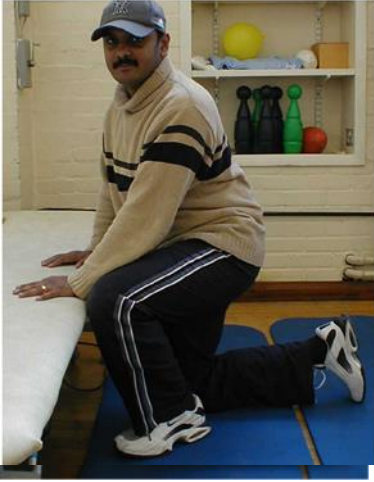
2. From the step put your hands back onto a sofa or chair (make sure that the chair is stable), push up onto the chair or sofa.



3. Using your arms push yourself up into side sitting.



4. Using your arms, push yourself up onto your knees.



5. Crawl to the nearest piece of sturdy furniture (something that is unlikely to move if you put your weight onto it).

6. Put your hands onto the piece of furniture and bend your strongest leg up



7. Push through your arms and strong leg to standing position.



8. Rest and alert your doctor if you have any serious injuries.

If you have any questions please contact us at;

**Disablement Services Centre, Rehabilitation Department  
Lower Ground Floor, Cumberland Infirmary  
Carlisle, CA2 7HY Tel: 01228 616868 Mon – Friday: 08:30 – 16:30**

## **Transport**

**Transport is available, if you meet the eligibility criteria Otherwise you will need to make your own way to the DSC. Please phone 0800 032 3240 to book your own transport**

## **Confidentiality**

**‘The Trust’s vision is to keep your information safe in our hands.’**

We promise to use your information fairly and legally, and in-line with local and national policies. You have a right to understand how your information is used and you can request a copy of the information we hold about you at any time.

For further information contact the [Subject Access Coordinators](mailto:Subject Access Coordinators)  
[SACCIC@ncuh.nhs.uk](mailto:SACCIC@ncuh.nhs.uk) or [SACWCH@ncuh.nhs.uk](mailto:SACWCH@ncuh.nhs.uk)

## **Feedback**

We appreciate and encourage feedback, which helps us to improve our services. If you have any comments, compliments or complaints to make about your care, please contact the PALS team (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) on 01228 814008 between 10.30 and 4.30 Monday to Friday or email [PALSCIC@ncuh.nhs.uk](mailto:PALSCIC@ncuh.nhs.uk).

If you would like this factsheet in another language or format, for example Braille, large print or audio the PALS team will be able to assist you (contact details above)

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