Health advice following a fall

Date of fall: ________________
Time of fall: ________________

You are receiving this information as you have experienced a fall in the last 72 hours, either at home or while in hospital.

We have checked your symptoms and it is unlikely that you will have any further problems. Falls can sometimes cause damage to a blood vessel that may bleed next to the brain. This is uncommon but can occur. This is more likely if the fall involved hitting your head. Symptoms may not develop for several days or even weeks after the fall.

Worsening or severe symptoms to watch out for

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Headache</th>
<th>Blurred vision</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A headache that gets worse and/or is not relieved with simple pain medication.</td>
<td>Problems focusing or you start seeing double.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drowsiness</td>
<td>Nausea and/or vomiting</td>
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<td>Fainting or drowsiness – or if you feel more tired than usual.</td>
<td>Feeling sick or you begin to vomit and this does not settle within two to three hours.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dizziness and/or weakness</td>
<td>Confusion</td>
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<td>Increasing dizziness</td>
<td>Unusually strange behaviour</td>
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<td>Difficulty walking steadily</td>
<td>Problems speaking or understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Losing your balance</td>
<td>Unable to recognise people, places or you get muddled up.</td>
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<td>Weakness in any of your limbs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seizures (rare)</td>
<td>Other symptoms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have a blackout or a seizure (any jerking of the body or limbs).</td>
<td>Continual clear fluid or bleeding from the ear or nose.</td>
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</table>

What to expect

Most people recover quickly and fully from their injury with no long-term problems. Over the next couple of days you may experience some **mild** symptoms such as minor headaches, feeling dizzy, irritability, tiredness, problems with concentration or memory, feeling sick without vomiting, lack of appetite and problems sleeping. If these **mild** symptoms do not go away after two weeks or they become worse, contact your GP.

It is normal for bruising to limit some of your movement for a few days after your fall. If you experience severe pain, which does not go away, or you have ongoing difficulty with moving and walking, speak to your GP.

Speak to your GP if you are worried about being able to drive or work.
Things that will help you get better

- show a relative/friend or carer this leaflet so they also know the symptoms to look for
- stay within easy reach of a telephone or your personal alarm in case you need help
- slowly increase activity to your normal level
- take your usual medications unless advised not to by your doctor
- do not drink alcohol until you feel better
- do not drive until you feel better.

Where to get help if needed

If your symptoms become worse within 72 hours after your fall, or you have any concerns please:

- call healthdirect 24-hour telephone health advice line on 1800 022 222 or
- call or visit your GP or
- go to the Emergency Department at your nearest hospital or
- call an ambulance.

If you are uncertain about any of this information, speak to your health professional or GP.

Discharge advice for carers of adults who have had a fall

Your relative/friend has been discharged from hospital. We have checked their symptoms and it is unlikely that they will have any further problems. They are being given this advice leaflet as they had a fall within 72 hours prior to this discharge. If your relative/friend has any symptoms listed in this leaflet or there are any concerns please ring healthdirect, contact their GP, go to the Emergency Department at their nearest hospital or call an ambulance.

Please ensure your relative/friend has a nearby phone and is able to contact someone easily.

For information on how to prevent further falls visit www.stayonyourfeet.com.au

Stay On Your Feet WA®

HealthyWA
healthywa.wa.gov.au

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with a disability.

Produced by Falls Prevention Health Network
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