

Falls are no laughing matter

Factsheet 16a – 29 May 09 (2 Pages)

Falls can lead to...

Injury, reduced quality of life, reduced mobility and loss of independence.

You are more at risk of a fall if you have...

- fallen before
- take 4 or more medicines
- had a Stroke or have Parkinson's Disease
- a problem with your balance
- difficulty getting up from a dining chair without using your arms.

Every 5 hours an older person dies as a result of a fall in the UK.

Every day 22 people in Devon call an ambulance due to a fall.

Help and advice on prevention is available from:

- your GP, Health Visitor, District Nurse or Therapist
- Care Direct tel: 0845 1551007
- NHS Direct tel: 0845 4647
- Adult & Community Services website: www.devon.gov.uk/falls

If you have a fall – don't panic

Call for help – try to shout, bang on the wall or crawl to the phone.

Assess the situation – decide if you can get up.

If you think you can get up...

1. Roll onto your hands and knees.
2. Crawl to a stable piece of furniture such as a bed or chair.
3. Place your hands on the bed or chair for support.
4. Place one foot flat on the floor bending your knee in front of your tummy.
5. Lean forward. Push onto your hands until you bring the other foot beside the first.
6. Turn and sit on the bed or chair.
7. Rest for a while before getting up.

If you are hurt and think you can't get up...

1. Rest and wait.
2. Move to a safe surface such as a carpeted area.
3. Keep warm and move out of draughts.
4. Keep moving – try to move your arms and legs and roll from side to side if you can.
5. Continue to call for help.

After any fall, report it to your GP and seek medical attention.

For further information and advice on how to reduce risks in your home see our factsheets: FS16b – Keeping well and safe at home and FS16c – Are you safe at home?

Further factsheets can be found online at www.devon.gov.uk/factsheets

If you have any further questions please contact **Care Direct 0845 1551 007**

A large print version of this factsheet is available on www.devon.gov.uk/largeprint-factsheets but if you would like it in a different format such as Braille or audio, or in a different language, please contact our Customer Service Centre on 0845 155 1015 or email customer@devon.gov.uk.