WHAT TO DO IF YOU FALL (CONT'D)

If you cannot get up, or believe you are injured:

- Get help! Use available alarm systems, try to call 9-1-1, bang on doors or walls and shout for help
- If your bladder "lets go," try to move away from the damp area on the floor
- Gently move around to help relieve pressure from the part of your body that is touching the floor
- Rest and wait for help

If you believe you are not hurt and are strong enough to get up:

- Roll onto your hands and knees and crawl to a sturdy chair
- Place your hands on the chair and put the foot from your stronger leg flat on the floor
- Bend the knee of your stronger leg toward your stomach
- Lean forward, putting weight on your arms
- Count to 3 and push up with both legs and arms until you are standing
- Turn and sit down on the chair. Rest until you feel ready to move again

Follow up with your family doctor or an emergency department after a fall. Immediate medical attention is needed if you hit your head, lose consciousness, become confused, take a blood thinner, or if you were injured in any way.

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Falls Prevention:
Going Home

RUNNYMEDE HEALTHCARE CENTRE

Falls prevention at home

HOW TO KNOW IF YOU ARE AT RISK OF FALLING

You may be at risk of falling if you had a recent illness, or currently have any of these health conditions:

- Vision impairment or loss
- Arthritis
- Stroke
- Parkinson's Disease
- Chronic heart failure
- Dizziness
- Balance or walking challenges
- Low blood pressure
- Cognitive impairment
- Muscle weakness

You may also be at risk of falling if any of the following apply:

- You have a fear of falling
- You tend to rush around your home
- You have slippery floor surfaces at home
- You often carry heavy items
- You stand on unsafe surfaces (e.g. chairs or stools)
- You keeps rugs and/or excess furniture at home
- You wear clothing or footwear that are unsafe (e.g. loose or uncomfortable)

MINIMIZING RISK OF FALLS AT HOME

Stairs, bathrooms and bedrooms are where most falls take place in the home. They are often caused by tripping over objects, low light, slippery surfaces and unsteady furniture.

Consider using and/or installing the following equipment:

- Grab bars in the bathroom
- Non-slip mats in the bath or shower
- Handrails on stairs
- Other adaptive equipment as recommended by your occupational therapist, including a reacher, shower chair, bed rail, etc.
- Home medical/ fall alert system

Remove tripping/slip hazards:

- Remove area rugs/ floor mats
- Move cords out of walking paths
- Remove furniture to increase space
- Remove outdoor hazards like snow and ice

Move with caution:

- Wear your glasses and hearing aids as prescribed
- Do not rush; move slowly when walking and changing positions (e.g. from sitting to standing)
- Avoid dragging your feet when walking; lift them from the floor
- Hold on to something steady when reaching
- Turn on your lights before moving around
- When changing direction, turn slowly with small steps instead of pivoting
- Keep rooms free of clutter

MINIMIZING RISK OF FALLS IN THE COMMUNITY

Follow these tips when you walk in your community:

- Walk slowly
- Be aware of your surroundings
- Always look ahead as you walk
- Watch for obstacles, including uneven pavement, curbs, doormats, etc.
- Avoid crowds
- Use extra caution in rainy or winter when surfaces are slippery
- Use mobility aid(s) as recommended

If taking transit, please ensure that you:

- Have payment ready
- Ask the driver to wait until you are seated
- Sit near the front
- Keep a hand free to hold onto handrails
- Wait until the vehicle has stopped before exiting
- Travel at non-peak times

WHAT TO DO IF YOU FALL

- Don't panic
- Take deep breaths
- Move slowly - don't try to get up too quickly
- Assess whether you are injured

(Please see reverse for more)