

## Getting up from the floor: advice for amputees

(PROSTHETIC LIMB USERS)



### Falls information

Falls are common among amputees. Falls can occur for many reasons and the majority of falls are preventable. To help reduce and prevent falls remember the following:

- Take your time and ensure you avoid taking risks (such as hurrying to the toilet)
- Phantom sensation may still make you feel like you have a leg and foot. Attempting to stand on a phantom limb is a common cause for falls
- Make sure that your home environment has good lighting, no loose rugs, no uneven or wet surfaces, no trailing cables and no clutter
- Place most frequently used items within easy reach
- Ensure regular check ups with your GP to review both your medication and blood pressure
- Make sure your eyes are regularly tested and wear your glasses as prescribed
- Keep active - inactivity leads to both weak muscles and poor balance
- Eat a healthy balanced diet and keep hydrated
- Limit alcohol intake

## Wheelchair use

- Always put wheelchair brakes on when stationary
- Ensure your wheelchair is as close to the transferring surface as possible
- Make sure your wheelchair is easily accessible at night
- Always double check that your brakes are on before you get in and out of the chair

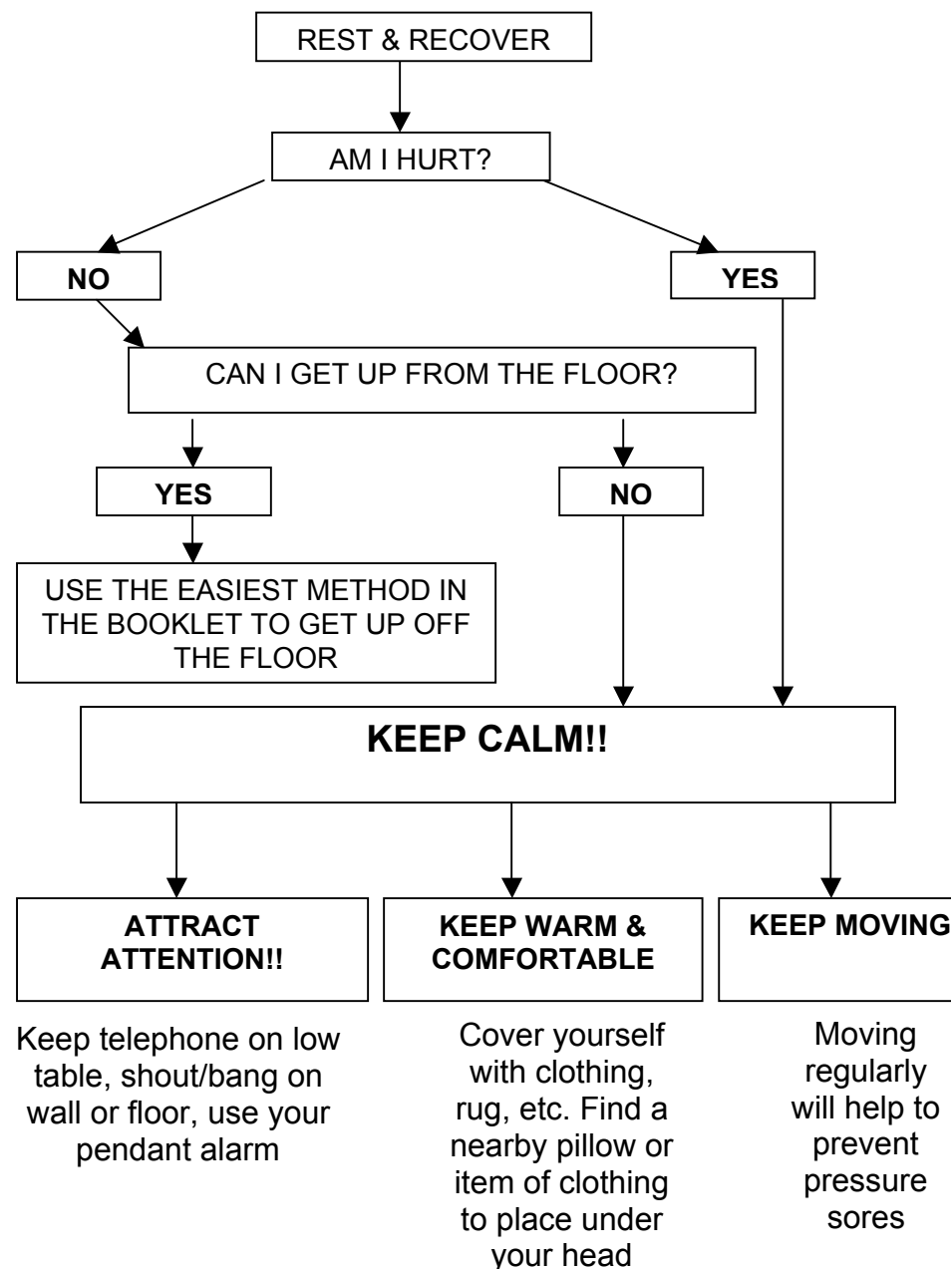
## Footwear

Wear shoes/slippers that:

- are comfortable
- fit properly
- have non-slip soles.

If you fall and are seriously injured, you need to go to A&E department or your GP.

## What to do if I fall?



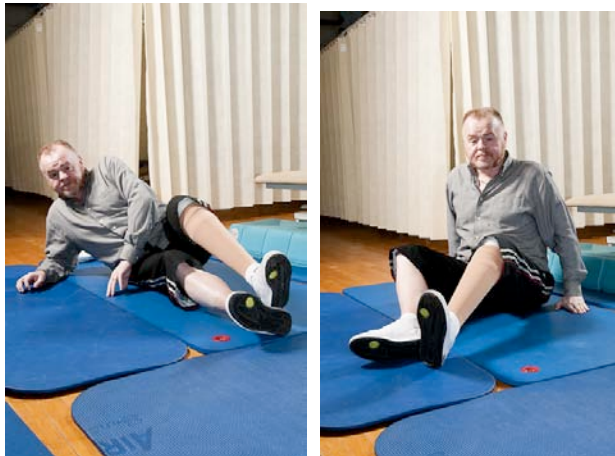
Your physiotherapist will practice the most suitable method for getting up off the floor before you leave hospital.

### Getting up from the floor Method 1

1. Stay calm and get your breath back.
2. Ensure that you are not hurt.



3. When you are ready roll onto your side and use both hands to push yourself up into sitting.



### Method 1 (continued)

4. When in sitting shuffle your bottom to a pile of cushions, footstool or step.



5. With both hands placed on the step, lift your body up onto the step.

## Method 1 (continued)



6. From the step place both hands onto the sofa or chair (ensure that the chair is stable eg. wheelchair or sofa is against the wall), push up onto the chair.

Alternatively:

You can place your hands onto the stable surface and push yourself straight onto the chair/sofa (stable surface), without using a step.

## Getting up from the floor Method 2

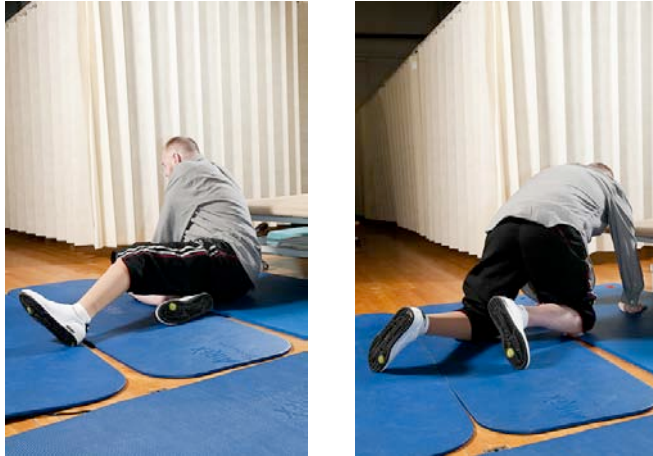
1. Stay calm and get your breath back.
2. Ensure that you are not hurt.



3. When you are ready roll onto your side and use both hands to push yourself up into sitting.

## Method 2 Continued

4. Roll toward your good leg and push yourself into four point kneeling.



5. Place your hands on chair/bed/sofa (stable surface) and push yourself into kneeling with your good leg.

## Method 2 Continued



4. Push yourself into standing. Pivot on your good leg toward the chair/sofa (stable surface) and sit down.

## General advice

If you notice problems (eg. damage to your skin, pain in a joint) – make an appointment with your GP.

If a fall has affected your transfer ability: contact your GP who will then refer you to your local physiotherapy team.

## Useful contacts

### **Limbless Association**

Queen Mary's Hospital

Roehampton Lane

London SW15 5PN

Tel: 020 8788 1777

Fax: 020 8788 3444

Web: [www.limbless-association.org](http://www.limbless-association.org)

Best time to telephone: 9am - 5pm, Monday – Friday

GP details:

Physiotherapist:

**If you would like a large print or audio version of this information, please ask a member of staff.**



Royal Free Hampstead **NHS**  
NHS Trust



© Physiotherapy department /  
Patient information programme 2010 [review: July 2013]  
[www.royalfree.nhs.uk](http://www.royalfree.nhs.uk)