

Fall Prevention: How to Handle a Fall¹

Leigh Nova, Linda B. Bobroff, and Wendy W. Lynch²

Follow these steps to decrease the chance of further injury after a fall.

Do not panic.

After a fall, panic is often the first reaction. It is essential to stay calm and remain still so you can think clearly and take the appropriate steps to get help if needed.

Check for injuries.

Do not get up if you think you may have a broken bone or another injury. Yell for help or crawl to the telephone and call for help.

Get up if you can.

If you can get up, do so slowly. Here is how to get up safely:

Step 1. Roll over onto your side. Rest to allow blood pressure to adjust.



Figure 1.
Credits: Kaylan B. Hebert, UF/IFAS

Step 2. Crawl to a stable chair.



Figure 2.
Credits: Kaylan B. Hebert, UF/IFAS

1. This document is FCS2233 (la versión español de este documento es *Prevención de Caídas: Como manejar una caída* (FCS2233-Span)), one of a series of the Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, UF/IFAS Extension. Original publication date April 2005. Revised October 2011 and September 2022. Visit the EDIS website at <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu> for the currently supported version of this publication.
2. Leigh Nova, MESS, former ENAFS nutrition educator/trainer; and Linda B. Bobroff, PhD, RDN, professor emeritus, Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences; and Wendy W. Lynch, regional specialized agent, UF/IFAS Extension Central District, and Extension agent, family and consumer sciences/food systems, UF/IFAS Extension St. Johns County; UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.

The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) is an Equal Opportunity Institution authorized to provide research, educational information and other services only to individuals and institutions that function with non-discrimination with respect to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations. For more information on obtaining other UF/IFAS Extension publications, contact your county's UF/IFAS Extension office. U.S. Department of Agriculture, UF/IFAS Extension Service, University of Florida, IFAS, Florida A & M University Cooperative Extension Program, and Boards of County Commissioners Cooperating. Andra Johnson, dean for UF/IFAS Extension.

Step 3. Put hands on the seat of the chair. Pull yourself up.



Figure 3.
Credits: Kaylan B. Hebert, UF/IFAS

Step 4. Bring one leg forward, bending the knee with your foot flat on the floor. The other leg will be bent, knee on the floor.



Figure 4.
Credits: Kaylan B. Hebert, UF/IFAS

Step 5. Slowly turn and sit in the chair.



Figure 5.
Credits: Kaylan B. Hebert, UF/IFAS

Make a list of phone numbers of people you can call in an emergency. Keep the list by the phone. If you need help immediately, call 911.

These videos demonstrate how to get up from a fall: <https://youtu.be/ytXndx5Gako>, <https://youtu.be/Qpl8E-7drdc>

Recommended resources: <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/prevent-falls-and-fractures>