



# Health advice following a fall

Patient:

**Note for health professionals:** Patients who are coagulopathic are at increased risk of complications. Information in this leaflet should be explained thoroughly

**Date of fall:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time of fall:** \_\_\_\_\_

You are receiving this information as you have experienced a fall in the last 48 hours, either at home or while in hospital. Please ensure that a family member/carer/friend has also read this leaflet.

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

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

## Where to get help if needed

If your symptoms become worse within 48 hours after your fall, or you have any concerns at any time please:

- \* Call 'healthdirect' 24-hour telephone 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**

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### 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,
- \* irritability/tearful/anxious
- \* problems with concentration or memory
- \* feeling sick without vomiting
- \* feeling dizzy
- \* lack of appetite
- \* problems sleeping
- \* tiredness

**If these mild symptoms do not go away after one week 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. Also 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 stay at home for the first 24 hours after leaving hospital
- ✗ Do not drink alcohol until you feel better
- ✗ Do not drive until you feel better

### Discharge advice for carers of adults who have had a fall

Your relative/friend has been discharged from hospital. They are being given this advice leaflet as they had a fall within 48 hours prior to this discharge. If your relative/friend has any symptoms listed in this leaflet, or there are concerns please phone 'healthdirect' on 1800 022 222, 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.

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