

## WHAT IF A FALL DOES OCCUR?

You should keep a phone or an alarm on the floor and wear an alarm bracelet with 911. This will make it easier for you to get help if the fall renders you unable to reach higher places. If the help is within hearing range, you should consider wearing a whistle. If you live alone, you can have someone check up on you at least once a day and see if you need any help.

If you happen to fall when you are alone, you may follow these steps to get back into a standing position:

- Lie down on your back
- Swing yourself onto your side
- Use your hands and get into a sitting position
- Slowly crawl towards the nearest object that can support your weight
- Put your hands on the seat of the furniture or chair and space them apart
- Bring your best leg up, so your knee is close to your chest
- Push up with your feet as well as your hand to get into a standing position

One of the missions of World Parkinson's Program is to prevent falls in Parkinson's patients. To accomplish this goal, it provides educational material in many languages as well as walking aids, including canes and walkers for people who cannot afford them.



### DID YOU KNOW?

The number of Parkinson's patients will double by 2031. Millions of Parkinson's patients around the world are suffering from poverty and...

- Cannot afford to buy their medications
- Cannot afford to purchase a cane, walker, or a wheelchair
- Cannot obtain educational literature about Parkinson's in their language
- Are not able to afford consulting a neurologist and remain undiagnosed and untreated

### OUR UNIQUE SERVICES

World Parkinson's Program is the only organization which provides the following unique services to Parkinson's patients around the world:

- Parkinson's medications to those patients who can't afford to buy them
- Canes, walkers & wheelchairs to prevent falls
- Parkinson's educational brochures in many languages
- Free electronic educational newsletter
- Chapters of World Parkinson's Program in various parts of the world

### JOIN THE FIGHT AGAINST PARKINSON'S

**TO DONATE, VISIT [PDPROGRAM.ORG](http://PDPROGRAM.ORG)**

This information is not a substitute of medical advice. Consult your Physician before applying this information.

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Frequently asked questions about

## PARKINSON'S DISEASE & FALL PREVENTION



ENGLISH - 6



[www.pdprogram.org](http://www.pdprogram.org)

*"Those who fight Parkinson's with knowledge always find solutions"- Dr. Rana*

Parkinson's disease is a progressive neurodegenerative condition characterized by tremors, slowness of movements, stiffness, and balance problems. In addition, Parkinson's has many non-motor symptoms such as memory or cognitive issues, speech and swallowing problems, depression, and sleep difficulties. It affects almost 10 million individuals around the world.

## **HOW ARE FALLS RELATED TO PARKINSON'S?**

About two thirds of the individuals with Parkinson's may encounter falls. Impaired balance, stooped posture, freezing, poor vision and the symptoms such as delayed reaction time, may make one vulnerable to falls. Another cause of falls may be the medications used for various other conditions such depression, sleep problems and drugs prescribed for high blood pressure.

## **WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF FALLS?**

Physical injuries such as bruises, cuts, fractures of bones and concussions can result from falls. These injuries not only interfere with the management of Parkinson's but also result in decreased independence leading to loss of confidence and depression.

## **HOW CAN I PREVENT FALLS IN MY HOME?**

In order to prevent falls, it is important to make sure that your home is safe. Your residence should be lit enough to allow you to easily navigate through it at the night time. You may also want to install night lights that can guide you to the bathroom if you need to get up at night.

If you have any loose rugs, they should be smoothed out or removed and replaced with wall to wall carpet so they do not make the floor uneven. The carpet helps by acting as a cushion if a fall does occur. If you have bare floors, do not wax them. Also, there should not be any loose objects on the floor on which you could trip over. Similarly, pets such as cats or dogs may lie on the floor causing a trip over. Make sure the walkways and steps of your home are in good condition.

The furniture inside your home should be strong enough to support your weight, so it can help you in case you lose your balance. Additionally, avoid furniture with glass tops as they may become a hazard. Furniture should not be moved around frequently. In this way, you will be familiar with your surroundings and will be able to find support in case of an emergency.

You should consider installing handrails in your hallway and bathroom. Handrails are also useful on both sides of a staircase. You may also want to mark the beginning and end of stairs with paint. In homes with multiple levels, you should have a phone on each level. Wireless phones may also be very helpful for you. Don't lock the bathroom door. Non slip bath tub, bath bench, showering, dressing and undressing while sitting, non-skid adhesive strips are also very effective and can be placed inside a tub or a shower stall.

In addition, a 'Home Safety Assessment' by an occupational therapist can give you further advice on how to make your home safer.

## **ROLE OF WALKING AIDS**

To assist those with balance problems that have difficulty walking without help, walking aids such as walkers, canes, and quad canes can be used. World Parkinson's Program provides free walking aids for those Parkinson's patients who cannot afford them.

## **ROLE OF PHYSIOTHERAPY**

A physiotherapist can help you improve gait and balance in order to prevent falls. Physiotherapy helps people cope with symptoms such as trouble moving around due to balance problems. Contact your physiotherapist for help with these issues.

## **HOW CAN I IMPROVE MY BALANCE?**

By having a good balance, you can prevent falls. You should make sure your shoes are in good shape and are comfortable. They should give you good support and fit well. Avoid wearing high heels.

When walking, you should avoid multitasking. When you have Parkinson's, your postural reflexes are decreased. Thus, you are at risk of losing your balance if you try to accomplish multiple tasks at once.

Keep one hand free at all times. This will allow you to quickly find support. Additionally, avoid carrying items in both of your hands and if you are standing still, you should try to keep your feet shoulder length apart. When they are closer together you are susceptible to a loss of balance and falling. Keep your outdoor steps clean and free of ice.