



Mastering the Art of Rising Up Safely from the Ground



GUEST CORNER

LIZE
LUBBE

As we age, the natural body movement to get up from the ground can become challenging. Whether you do yoga, gardening, relaxing on the beach or after a fall, we must prepare and train our bodies how to safely get up from the ground.

REASONS AGING INCREASES YOUR RISK OF FALLING:

- Environmental factors - hazards in the environment such as slippery floors, poor lighting, uneven terrain.
- Balance issues - the body's ability to maintain balance derives from a complex system consisting of the visual, the vestibular (inner ear) and proprioceptive (sensory nerves) system and any problem with one or more of the systems affect our balance and ability to be stable and coordinated.
- Gait abnormalities - muscle weakness, joint stiffness, or limited flexibility that results in a shuffling gait and not clearing your feet when taking a step.
- Poor posture - with the center of gravity not in your base of support.
- Cognitive impairments - such as dementia.
- Fear of falling - due to previous falls.

REASONS WHY IT BECOMES MORE DIFFICULT TO GET UP FROM THE GROUND AS WE AGE:

- Decline in muscle strength.
- Reduced flexibility and joint mobility.
- Impaired balance.
- Joint stiffness and pain.

According to the Center for Disease and Control and Prevention (CDC), falls are the leading cause of injury for adults 65 years and older, one in four people fall each year.

Falling once also doubles your chance of falling again.*

RECOMMENDED EXERCISES TO TRAIN YOUR BODY TO GET UP SAFELY FROM THE FLOOR/GROUND:

The following exercises will improve your ability to get up from the floor. Do then twice per day, two sets of ten each with a rest period of 30 seconds in-between. Never hold your breath: breathe deep in and out as you perform the exercises. Once

you master the first exercise without difficulty, move onto the next exercise. Start by holding onto a sturdy surface and progress to holding onto the back of a chair as you feel stronger and more balanced, then to no hands held.

1. Stand with feet shoulder width apart - hinge from the hips with a flat back and bend down into a mini squat then return to the upright position again by squeezing your Glutes and core muscles.

2. Stand in a split stance - slightly larger step than a normal stride. Feet spaced about a foot apart in distance. Keep most of your weight on the front leg. Leaning your trunk slightly forward and lunge slowly down and upright again squeezing your core and glutes. Switch legs.

3. Lunge down as in #2, but go down until your knee touches the ground then back to the upright position again.

4. Lunge down as in #3, place your hands down on the floor and go onto both knees to be on all fours (Quadruped). If you have knee problems, place a soft pillow/pad under your knees. Then bring your stronger leg forward to a half knee position. Weight bear through your front leg and foot and come up to standing.

5. Progress only to #5 once you mastered steps 1-4 without difficulty and can hold onto the back of a chair or without any handhold assistance:

a. From Quadruped (#4), side-sit to one side then lay down onto your back, this is to mimic lying on the beach or grass or if you fall and find yourself on your back.

b. Bend your knees and place your feet flat on the ground, do curl-up crunches flattening your lower back into the ground and exhale as you curl/crunch up with your hands to your knees, until you can come up to sitting.

c. To get up from sitting on the ground, turn onto the Quadruped position, to half-kneeling, and then to standing.

GUIDANCE WHEN YOU FALL:

1. Stay calm and take a few minutes to check your body for any pain or injuries.

2. If you are hurt or unable to get off the floor, call for help and stay calm. Keep warm and move as best you can while you wait.

3. If you are not hurt, roll onto your side, push yourself up to a side-sitting position, and slowly get into the Quadruped position.

4. Crawl to a sturdy piece of furniture (e.g., a chair or sofa) that can support you to get up from the floor:

a. Put both hands on the seat of the chair or sofa, put your stronger leg forward in a half-kneeling position;

b. Push through your leg, foot, and hands, turn your body as you raise yourself

up until your behind is safely on the seat of the chair or sofa; and

c. Before you get up, take time to check your body for any injuries or dizziness.

5. Modifications to the above:

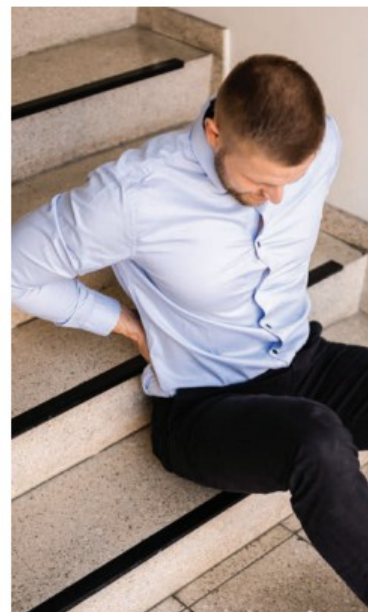
a. If you have injured/arthritis knees and cannot crawl, scoot on your bottom to the sofa or chair;

b. If no chair or sofa is close by, use a step or staircase to sit on; and

c. If someone comes to your aid, a risk exists of injury to both of you, as you are deadweight being pulled up from the floor. Follow the above advice and someone can stand behind you to assist you getting onto the chair.

Please contact your healthcare provider or physical therapist if you have any difficulty performing the exercises or need guidance in training to get up safely from the floor.

*See <https://www.cdc.gov/falls/data-research>



Lize Lubbe is the owner of Lize Lubbe Physical Therapy with its main practice located at 892 Route 35 in Cross River and a PT Studio in the premises of Apex Fitness (where her team focus on the rehabilitation of sports-related injuries). Learn more by calling 914-875-9430, emailing contact@lizeclubbept.com or visiting www.lizeclubbept.com.



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