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Thank you for your honesty!

Intended Use:

I create these resources with the intended use of them being educational and advocational for individuals with limb loss and prosthetic devices and the occupational therapy profession as a whole. It is expected these products will be shared both in print form and electronically, as well as posted in public settings as appropriate.

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If you notice any typos or mistakes or have any questions, please feel free to email me directly at otunlimbited@gmail.com.

If you are looking for more (free) resources - reference guides, intervention ideas, and more - please visit otunlimbited.com!

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Hold on to Hope!
Tori Martin

Fall Prevention

Causes

- Forgetting About Amputation
 - Commonly occurs at night
 - Secondary to phantom limb sensation (it feels like your leg/foot is still there and you try to stand on it)
- Lack of Physical Activity
 - Weaker muscles
 - Decreased balance
 - Reduced endurance
- Decreased Sensory Awareness
 - Sensation may be affected secondary to diabetes, poor blood flow, or prosthetic device (you can not always feel where your foot is in space)
 - Vision deficits may decrease your awareness of your surroundings, including visual acuity, depth perception, and peripheral vision deficits; these may be secondary to aging with diabetes
- Medications
 - May reduce alertness, cause drowsiness, worsen balance, and cause abrupt changes in blood pressure
- Environmental Hazards
 - Rugs, cords, foreign objects, clutter, etc.

4 Steps to Fall Prevention

- Begin a regular exercise program
- Have your healthcare provider review your medications
- Have your vision checked regularly
- Make your home safer

Ask your healthcare providers for resources on home safety assessments (OTs may complete these, and they may also be offered for free through your local Council on Aging or similar organization).

Prevention Tips

- Place wheelchair/walker on the side of the bed where you get up
- Push bed against a wall and have spouse sleep blocking you in
- Engage in regular exercise to promote strength, flexibility, endurance, and balance (incorporate entire body - trunk/core, arms, residual limb)
- Scan your surrounding before standing or walking
- Use a night light
- Create color contrast between objects and floor, thresholds, steps, etc.
- Know the effects of your medications & stay up to date with prescriptions
- Reduce clutter, remove throw rugs, space out furniture
- Install grab bars and non-skid mats
- Take your time!!



Fall Recovery

What to do (or not to do) if you fall?

- Don't panic!!
- Calmly assess your situation and determine your plan of action
 - Quick self-scan - Are you injured?
 - Look around the environment - Can/will you attempt to get up?
- Crawl or scoot to a safe place
- Call for assistance
- Use sturdy furniture to assist with rising
 - If you use a wheelchair, be sure to lock the brakes
 - If you use a household chair, push it against a wall or stable surface
- Seek medical attention as appropriate

4 Outcomes of Fall Recovery

- To get close enough to someone to call out for help
- To get to a phone
- To recover to a position that is stable to sit and wait on assistance
- Fully recover to an upright standing position to safely return to mobility device

Steps to Fall Recovery

1. Move into a side-lying position
2. Roll to prone (on your stomach/face down) position
3. Bilateral elbow stabilization (prop self up on elbows)
4. Contralateral stabilization (push up to one hand and one knee - opposite sides of the body)
5. Quadruped (push up onto both hands and both knees - if possible)
6. Crawl to support surface
7. External stabilization - place one or both hands/forearms on stabilizing surface
8. Rising to partial knee position (one foot on floor, one knee on ground, and upper extremities on stabilizing surface, similar to "taking a knee")
9. Push up to standing (you do not have to let go of the stabilizing surface, but may if comfortable - you want to rise high enough that you can turn and sit)
10. Turn and sit

Disclaimer: These fall recovery techniques should be taught and practiced under an occupational or physical therapist's direct supervision! They will help you modify the steps to fit your abilities.

Resources

Brooks Fall Prevention Presentation Resource

University of St. Augustine for Health Science Fall Recovery Presentation

Burns, E. R., Stevens, J. A., & Lee, R. (2016). The direct costs of fatal and non-fatal falls among older adults—United States. *Journal of Safety Research*, 58, 99–103. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jsr.2016.05.001>

