10 Tips for FULL Fall Recovery and Re-Injury Prevention

If you've fallen in the past, you may find yourself lacking body confidence because you are afraid you will fall again. This kind of scenario is very common and can be daunting if your falls are leading to bone fractures and a host of other debilitating problems.

So, how do you avoid “falling” into this catch 22 trap?

Many of us do not “fully” recovery or do not recovery “adequately” enough from falls despite the fact that all human bodies have been designed to bounce back from falling. We have been hard-wired to run away from the brontosaurus, fall over a rock and heal.

So what’s different now?

I'm sure plenty is different now than from the time of the brontosaurus, but then a human's nervous system would most likely complete its natural responses after a fall.

After any injury the autonomic nervous system will become highly spiked or suppressed and it is healthy to allow it to do so because this reaction enables it to come back to its normal functioning range. If it doesn't find its way back to its “comfort zone” it may send out pain signals to other parts of your body. This is how your fall recovery can become thwarted.
You may be wondering why this is even an issue? Doesn't the autonomic nervous system take care of itself? You don't have to tell it to breath, or to sweat, or to move your hand away from a flame? Why would you need to pay attention to it if you fall?

The answer lies precisely in the difference between brontosaurus time and now: that difference is called civilization. We are civilized people, at least for the sake of others, but we are also human mammals and our bodies did not evolve to recover from injury through our various forms of shopping mall etiquette.

Imagine for a moment we turned back the clock 1,000 years, and you saw me running with my handy bow and arrow after a deer and then promptly trip over a rock. If we replay this scene in slow motion what would we notice?

I run, trip, and look up stunned for a minute. I sit up slowly, and I look around in all directions. I may shake or shutter a little without thinking. Then, I hold my ankle for a moment and grit my teeth. I am likely to scream out something like “ouch!” Played back in real time I run, fall, look stunned for a moment, quickly grab my ankle and scream out depending on the degree of pain.

What would it look like if you fell in a shopping mall instead?

As I said before, let's not forget that we all come from more or less civilized homes. That's not to suggest that we should instead grow up like savages, but “civilized” can really get in the way of the body.

For starters, if we fell in the mall most of us would be so mortified we fell that we won't want to lie there an extra second. We'd want to get up and get going right away, which is the worst thing you can do for your body's nervous system re-regulation.

Another testament to our good manners is that we won't want to be a burden on anybody so we would tell others we were fine even if we know we're not. Heaven forbid we created “a big production.”

The final kicker is that we won't want to feel vulnerable or broken in any way. Society does a good job making us feel like something's wrong with us if we aren't perfect. And even if we were OK with feeling broken, from a practical standpoint who has the time for being injured anyway??! Isn't this how it goes?

So, you can see how different it might be to fall in the mall today than it might have been for our ancestors. The biggest issue with how we experience our modern falling is that it doesn't allow the autonomic nervous system's natural impulses and cycles to complete.
The issue of incomplete nervous system responses only becomes more prevalent the older we get. A 20 or even 30yr old’s muscles and bones and ligaments might be so strong at that point that they can “muscle through” their incompleteness, but as we get older our need for nervous system completion only becomes greater.

In fact these days, most professional athletes at any age know if they don't work with their neurological responses after an injury, there will be trouble down the road. So, I am now going pass on to you the secrets behind full fall recovery.

**Here are the 10 Golden Tips for Full Fall Recovery and Re-injury Prevention:**

1. Take time. Catch your breath…really allow yourself that moment of shock.
2. Look around *slowly*. Let your eyes adjust to what’s around you and allow your eyes to *scan* in all directions, really notice where the threat came from…that crack in the cement, that dip in the road, that piece of paper on the floor. Really see it. And allow your eyes to access any further danger. Are you safe where you have landed or are you in the middle of the road with oncoming cars? Always make safety your number one priority.
3. If you know you are safe, and some nice person is trying to talk to you to see if you are alright. Just nod gently and say as calmly as you can, “give me a minute.” *Stay with your body and out of your mind for as long as you can.*
4. If you find yourself shaking even slightly allow that to happen. That’s a natural and important body response, your teeth may chatter, you can shudder, feel warm or cold, etc. Just let it happen. It will stop. Believe me, you aren't having a nervous breakdown, rather you are experiencing a much needed nervous system release!
5. Allow yourself to keep checking in and hold or touch that spot or those spots where it hurts in a natural protective way.
6. Allow yourself to make a noise, but only if it *comes naturally*. Don’t force anything or try to think yourself into action.
7. Be with your breath. If a breath doesn’t come naturally take a nice deep breath or two. Don’t allow your breath to be interrupted by unnecessary talking or doing.
8. Again, use common sense. You should only allow yourself this luxury of experience if you can determine that you or someone else is safe where they are. Then, you might think about whether you make a call? Determine how far you are from home or the car?
9. And of course, human contact can be a lifesaver. You just want to be sure the nervous system isn’t inhibited by well-meaning human contact at the wrong time.

10. Last but not least, there is a bonus step just for being human. Close your eyes and envision you, your loved ones, and the planet, safe, happy, balanced and upright!