

Patient Case

A 58 year old female presenting to the ED as a walk-in (transported via taxi) following a fall in her home yesterday that resulted in an injury to her right (dominant) shoulder. She was unable to sleep last night due to the pain and states the pain is worse today than yesterday, preventing her from being able to raise the UE more than 45 degrees in any direction.

The fall resulted from a rapid transition from sitting to standing followed by a left-hand turn after hearing her oven timer. She remembers sensing the room spinning, then losing her balance, and grabbing the refrigerator handle with her right UE to try to prevent a fall, which was unsuccessful. She reports some episodes of similar dizziness in the past, but no previous falls related to this. She has fallen in her home 4 times in the past 6 months, described as “tripping over my own feet,” with resulting bruises and scrapes, but no serious injury.

The patient lives alone in a 2nd-floor apartment that is not equipped with an elevator. She is not employed currently, having recently lost a factory job due to frequent absences. She is 5'2" (157.5cm) and 317lbs (144kg) and her medical history includes Type 2 diabetes (not well controlled due to poor diet and inconsistent medication availability), HTN, high cholesterol, depression/anxiety.