

Preventing Falls

When you are admitted, we will assess you for your risk of falling and determine what measures should be taken to prevent a fall while you are in hospital.

If you are at risk of falling during your hospital stay, the team will place a “falling star” sign at your bedside, outside your room and on your chart. The team will also write your activity level on the white board located in your room. This way all hospital staff will know if you need assistance or have been identified as being at risk for a fall.

Strategies for Preventing Falls in Your Hospital Room



Call Light: Please call for help before getting out of your bed or chair. Use the call light attached to your bed and wait for help to arrive.



Bathroom: Most hospital falls occur when patients are getting up to use the bathroom. Please call for assistance, and use the handrails in the washroom. We will ask you often if you need assistance.



Awareness of Your Room: Please look around your room and bathroom. Be aware of your surroundings. Sometimes, when in a new environment, it can be hard to remember how the room is arranged.

Belongings Close at Hand: Use your bedside stand to keep your glasses, hearing aid, TV control, or water, so these items are within reach.



Upper Side Rails: The upper side rails on your bed can be used for support when getting out of bed.



Vision: Be sure to wear your glasses and turn on the lights before getting up.

Strategies for Preventing Falls While Walking

Exercise in Bed: Pump your ankles back and forth before trying to sit up and get out of bed.

Sit before Standing: When you are sick or have been in bed for a while, you can become dizzy if you stand too quickly. Before standing, sit on the edge of your bed for two to three minutes until dizziness clears.

Footwear: Wear low-heeled walking shoes, not backless slippers or socks. They will give you better traction and stability when walking. Grip socks are encouraged.

Walking Aids: If you use a cane, walker or crutches at home, please have them brought to the hospital for your personal use.

Walking: Illness can affect your strength and balance. If you feel dizzy or weak, please call for help.

Other Fall Prevention Strategies

Medications: Some medications may increase your risk of falling. You are at higher risk of falling when medication doses are changed. Call for help if you feel weak or dizzy while in hospital. A pharmacist can review your current medications with you or your family on request.

Bed Alarm: Please ask about pressure sensitive alarms.

Regular Patient Rounding: For your safety, the team rounds regularly.

Whiteboard: The Whiteboard in your room should be updated by your team to communicate your activity status.

How to Prevent a Fall at Home:

- Remove excess clutter and all floor mats. Even mats with rubber backing can roll at the edges causing a tripping hazard.
- Use nightlights, so there is adequate lighting at night.
- If you have trouble rising from a seated position consider raising the height of your furniture with furniture risers and using a raised toilet seat. Install grab bars in and around the bathtub, shower and toilet to provide extra support while steadying yourself and consider getting a shower chair or bench.
- Always wear supportive footwear. Avoid heels and shoes or slippers with no backs
- Consider purchasing a cane or walker for added support.

Special Family Note

We want to keep your loved one safe. Please alert the nursing staff when you are leaving after a visit.

Because hospital staff members cannot remain at a patient's side at all times, please talk with the nurse if you have a concern. Reminders about your loved one's needs are displayed on the whiteboard located in the patient room.

Please ask a staff member if you have any questions or need assistance.