Working with you to reduce the risk of falls while in the hospital

Always wear your glasses and hearing aid while awake!
Why are falls a major concern in the hospital?

Falls lead to injury and loss of independence.

1 in 3 people who have fallen in the past few months will likely fall again.

Am I at risk for falling?

If you can check (✓) any of these statements, you are at risk for falling.

☐ I have fallen or lost my balance
☐ I feel unsure or unsteady when I walk
☐ I stopped doing things because I am afraid of falling
☐ I feel confused at times
☐ I am taking medications for pain
☐ I am taking new medications that make me feel sleepy, dizzy, light headed or weak
☐ I have trouble walking or getting out of a chair

Ways to reduce the risk of fall

Get to know your room

Make sure that:

✓ your call bell is within reach
✓ there is at least 1 bedrail down on your bed
✓ you can reach the overhead light switch cord over your bed
Be safe in your room

- Make sure that you have a safe, clutter-free path to the bathroom.
- Use the grab bars if available.
- Call for help when getting up until we feel you are safe to do this by yourself.
- Ask for help to clean up spills or to pick up items you may have dropped such as tissues and clothes.
- Do not lean on over bed tables with wheels.
- Keep frequently used items, including your phone, close to you.
- Use a “reacher” for hard to reach items.

Clothing

- Should be easy to put on. Many people wear sweat pants. Make sure pant legs are not too long (past your ankles) or you may trip.
- Wear well-fitting shoes with good support and rubber soles.
- Wear your glasses and hearing aids while awake.
Get up safely

- Ring the call bell for help when getting up until you and the team decide is no longer necessary.
- If you feel lightheaded or dizzy when you sit up from lying down, pump your feet until the feeling goes away.
- Get up slowly.
- Make sure your feet are flat on the floor before standing.
- Sit down right away if you feel dizzy and ring the call bell for help.

Be safe when walking

- Wear only non-skid shoes or slippers with rubber soles.
- Do not walk around in regular socks. Wear only non-skid socks with rubber on the bottom.
- Do not rush to the bathroom or to answer the phone. It is hard to concentrate on being safe when rushing and this is when most falls happen.
- Go to the bathroom before and after meals and before settling into bed. Do not wait until the last minute to go to the bathroom.
Equipment

- Keep your wheelchair, walker or cane close by so you do not have to reach for them.
- Lock your wheelchair or walker brakes before you begin to stand up or sit down.
- Lock brakes when not in use.

Participate

- Take an active part in your rehabilitation plan. We will discuss your plan and work with you.
- Working to build strength, flexibility, and endurance will help to prevent a fall.

Fall prevention is a team effort

Patients and family members play a key role in preventing falls.

- If you are at a high risk for falls and fall injuries, the team will work together with you to manage this risk.
- Your health care team will review your medications, look at equipment you may need and include other health professionals who can help in your care.
- Ask if you have any questions