

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

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**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

