

Fall Prevention

Because we care about the health and well being of our patients we want to educate you and your family about the risk of falling. A hospital stay is often a stressful situation, you are unfamiliar with your surroundings and the routine. It is important that you take care while in the hospital to avoid the risk of falling.

Who is at Risk for Falling

Your healthcare team will evaluate your risk for falling when you are admitted to the hospital and throughout your stay. If you have had surgery the effects of anesthesia used may cause you to be unsteady for up to 48 hours, this would be a temporary risk for falling. There may be other contributing factors you should be aware of and report to your healthcare providers.

You may be at risk for falling if you:

- Have a history of falling or a history of fainting or seizures
- Have high blood pressure or arthritis
- Have incontinence, or are currently taking laxatives which cause incontinence
- Have difficulty walking or keeping your balance
- Have recently had an operation, the anesthesia you received may make you unsteady on your feet
- Have feelings of confusion or disorientation about where you are
- Are taking four or more different medications that may cause side effects that put you at risk for falling
- Are taking medication to help you sleep or relax, these can cause drowsiness that make you unsteady, or you have an irregular sleep pattern
- Have difficulty with vision or hearing

How We Keep You Safe

If you have a fall risk, your healthcare team will take steps to keep you safe. We use "Fall Risk" signs and stickers to identify patients who may be at increased risk for falls. This alerts anyone coming into your room.

Your healthcare team is trained to safely assist you while getting out of bed. Other precautions include keeping your bed rails up, keeping the bed in a low position with the brakes on, or using a bed or chair alert. Your safety is our priority!

Tips to Prevent Falls

- Use non-skid slippers at all times.
- Keep your call light at your bedside and ask that your phone be moved close to you so you do not have to reach to get them.

- If you have received pain medications or sleeping pills and need to get out of bed be sure and call your nurse to assist you.
- While in the hospital be aware of IV tubes and cords or cables that may be beside the bed.
- Please do not use the rolling bedside table to support yourself.
- Use walkers or canes as assistive devices if instructed to do so.
- Never climb over the bed rails.
- If you can safely get out of bed, make sure your feet are firmly on the floor before moving forward. Take care not to slide off the mattress.
- If your doctor has instructed that you only get out of bed with assistance, please do not try to get up on your own. Please ask for assistance, the staff is never too busy to help you. Your safety is our primary goal.
- Having a family member or friend sit with you during your stay is helpful, they can get assistance for you as needed.