

HOW TO AVOID FALLS IN THE HOSPITAL



DID YOU KNOW?

Falls are the most common safety risk in hospitals, especially for older adults and patients with mobility issues.

A FALL CAN LEAD TO...

- Fractures
- Head injury
- Longer hospital stays

COMMON CAUSES OF FALLS

- **Medication:** Sedatives, pain medication or blood pressure medication can cause dizziness or fatigue
- **Weakness & Fatigue:** Patients recovering from illness or surgery may feel weaker than they think they are
- **Environmental Hazards:** Clutter, slippery floors and improper bed heights can lead to falls
- **Rushing:** Many falls happen when patients get up quickly to go to the bathroom
- **Medical Equipment:** IV poles, catheters and oxygen tubing can create tripping hazards

FALL PREVENTION STRATEGIES

- **Use Call Bells:** Always ask for help when getting up, especially at night
- **Proper Footwear:** Always wear non-slip socks or shoes
- **Clear the Environment:** Ensure pathways are free of clutter and that spills are cleaned up immediately
- **Keep Personal Items Close:** Place water, phone and tissues on the bedside table to avoid unnecessary movement
- **Use Support:** If you have a walker, cane or grab bars, use those
- **Teamwork:** Nurses and physical therapists can assist, assess mobility and provide support



Speak up if you feel unsteady, always use your call button, and follow hospital safety guidelines.

FALL CHECKLIST: CAUSES & PREVENTION

Causes	
Medications such as sedatives, pain medication or blood pressure medication	
Weakness and fatigue after illness or surgery	
Environmental hazards such as clutter, slippery floors or improper bed height	
Rushing to get up quickly	
Medical equipment such as IV poles, catheters and oxygen tubing	

Prevention	
Use call bells and ask for help when getting up	
Wear proper footwear such as non-slip socks or shoes	
Keep personal items on the bedside table to avoid unnecessary movement	
Use a walker, cane or grab bar if they are available	
Use teamwork including nurses and physical therapists	

Please visit www.hospitalsafetygrade.org to check hospital scores on preventing falls and injuries.