

Tips to prevent falls and keep you safe

Summary Points to Remember

- It is very important to ask for help if you don't feel comfortable or safe about moving around
- Talk about reducing your chances of falling by speaking to your nurse or carer
- Call, don't fall

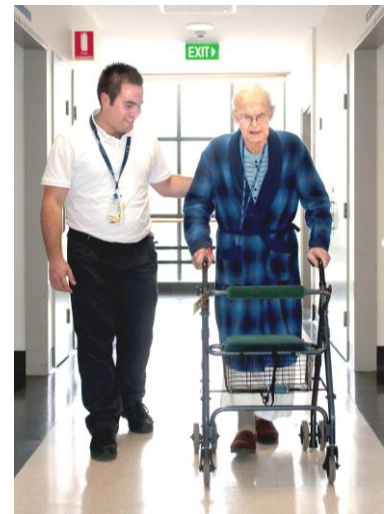
We want you to be as safe as possible

Unfortunately falls are common, but only a few cause serious injuries. A fall can affect your confidence in walking, and may extend or result in a hospital stay.

People fall because of:

- current illness and medications
- certain medical conditions
- an unfamiliar environment
- obstacles
- poor balance
- unsafe footwear
- poor eyesight
- confusion
- urgent need for toileting

Staff, patients, your family and carers all have a role in minimising the risk of falls. This brochure will outline ways to achieve this.



We ask you to tell us:

- if you have fallen before or have been feeling dizzy recently
- if you have difficulties with your feet or legs, or feel that your balance is affected
- if your medications make you drowsy, confused or poorly coordinated
- if you need to go to the toilet urgently

Getting around safely:

- always use a stick, frame or hip protectors if this has been recommended for you
- wear flat, non-slip shoes at all times when you are moving around
- sit on the side of the bed for a short time before standing up or moving into your wheelchair
- always put the brakes on and check that the foot plates are up before you move into a wheelchair
- call for assistance if you need to get up overnight
- make sure your family and carers are also aware that you may fall and to take precautions

Going to the toilet:

- Your toileting routine may change while you are receiving treatment. Some medications may cause you to need the toilet urgently. Your nurse or carer may need to stay with you in the bathroom/toilet for your safety. Where possible plan these visits and remember: **'Call, don't fall'**

What to expect when you come to hospital

Staff will:

- help you to settle in and keep your surroundings safe
- orient you to your room, the toilets and communal areas
- assess whether you are at risk of falling, then talk with you and your family about how to reduce any risk

Please bring to hospital:

- your glasses
- your hearing aids
- your walking stick or frame (labelled with your name)
- comfortable flat non-slip shoes with laces or velcro to fasten
- your current medications and tablets – these will be checked while you are in hospital

While you are in hospital:

- have the call bell within easy reach at all times so you can ask for assistance when needed
- keep frequently used items such as glasses and walking aids within reach
- make sure there are no obstacles around the bed for you to trip over
- never lean on bedside tables or meal tables, because they have wheels and could roll away

Safety aids

Safety aids may be recommended to keep you safe in hospital. These include:

- beds that can be lowered to be very close to the ground
- a non-slip mat placed on the floor near the lowered bed
- a mattress that prevents rolling out of bed
- bed and chair alarms



Family and friends can help by:

- making sure the call bell and bedside table is within your reach
- reminding you to ask the nurse for help when getting up, if this is required
- telling the nurse before they leave if you are experiencing confusion or disorientation, so that safety measures can be taken
- staying with you if you are at high risk of falling or experiencing confusion

Contact: If you have any queries about the information in this brochure or you would like more information on how you can help prevent a fall, please speak to the Nurse in Charge.

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