

Preventing Falls in the Hospital

While you are in the hospital, you may have tests, treatments or new medicines that could cause you to feel weak, dizzy or confused. Even being in bed for just one day can make you feel weak. Staff will work with you and your family to help you avoid falling while you are in the hospital.

To Help Prevent Falls:

- Ask the staff for help **before** you get out of bed. Your doctor or nurse will tell you when it is safe for you to get out of bed or go to the bathroom without help.
- Anytime you feel weak, lightheaded or dizzy, ask for help **before** getting out of bed.
- Make sure your call light, table, telephone and anything else you need are within reach before staff leaves the room.
- Wear slippers, socks or shoes that will not slip. Ask for a pair of non-slip socks if needed.
- Keep the side rails on your bed up. Do not lean against or climb over the side rails. They are used to keep you from falling out of bed.
- Take your time. Move slowly. Sit at the side of the bed for a minute before you stand up.
- Never use an IV pole or anything with wheels to support you.
- Go to the toilet often so you will not have to hurry.
- Ask someone to unplug and plug in your IV pump. Bending over can cause dizziness.
- Avoid wearing long nightgowns or robes.
- Keep a light on in your room—even at night.
- Ask how to use devices such as canes, walkers and wheelchairs.

Expect that staff will:

- Check on you often.
- Respond quickly to call lights and alarms.
- Store equipment and items out of the way.
- Clean up spills or slippery spots.

Your care team may use special equipment to keep you safe or to show that you are at higher risk for falling.

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns.

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