

Tips for family and friends

We want to make sure your friend or relative is as safe and comfortable as possible.

If you are concerned that your friend or relative may be at risk of a fall, please let us know.

If you know that your friend or relative has a recent history of falls or feeling unsteady on their feet, tell us so we can make sure they get the extra care they need.

You can also help to reduce the chance of your friend or relative having a fall while in hospital and at home by:

- Making sure that the call bell, phone and personal items are in easy reach.
- Calling the nurse if you think your friend or relative is feeling lightheaded or dizzy.
- Staying with your friend or relative if they are confused and calling a nurse before you leave.
- Reminding your friend or relative to ask for help from the nursing team before getting up if they feel unsteady.

Further information

For more information please visit:

-National Institute for Health and Care Excellence:

www.nice.org.uk

-The European Delirium Association:

www.euroandeliriumassociation.com

-Delirium is more common in **dementia**. To read more about this visit:

www.alzheimers.org.uk

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or whh-tr.PALS@nhs.net

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet please email whh-tr.patient-information@nhs.net. We will try our best to meet your needs.

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STOPfalls

Reducing falls in hospital - a guide for patients and carers



Falls in hospital

If you are staying in hospital and recovering from an illness or surgery, you may be at a higher risk of having a fall.

Having a fall while in hospital can slow down your recovery, as well as possibly being painful or upsetting.

We want to do everything we can to make sure you are safe in hospital and to help reduce the risk of a fall, a nurse will complete a care plan with you.

Depending on your risk of falling, staff may also take extra precautions to make sure you are safe. This might include placing a mattress on the floor, using bed safety rails or coming to check on you more often.

The decision about what extra support you might need will be made by a senior nurse and other members of the team looking after you. Any extra care we think you might need will be discussed with you, your family and carers to make sure you are fully informed.

If our teams feel you are at a very high risk of falling, you may notice a yellow card on the whiteboard at the head of your bed and on nearby walking aids. Also you will be asked to wear yellow non slip socks and a yellow wristband.

Tips to help reduce your risk of falling

There are a number of things you can do when in hospital to help reduce your risk of falling, including:

- Using the call bell to ask for assistance when you need help.
- Asking nursing staff for help going to and from the bathroom. This is very important if you are feeling unsteady. There will be a call light in the bathroom may be located on the wall.
- Allowing a member of the nursing team to stay with you in the bathroom if needed.
- Considering using a urinal or commode if you take medicines that cause you to go to the bathroom more frequently.

“Please tell us if you are worried about falling”

- Taking your time when getting out of bed or a chair. Some medicines, especially painkillers, can cause you to feel sleepy or dizzy. Sitting on the bed for a few seconds before you get up can help to reduce dizziness.
- Wearing nonslip footwear or slippers when you are out of bed.
- Putting on any eyeglasses or hearing aid(s) when you wake up.
- Not leaning on bedside tables, furniture, IV pole or other items to steady yourself and using a walker or cane that will give you the support you need.
- Asking a member of your healthcare team to make sure your personal items and call bell are within easy reach before they leave the room.
- Telling one of our nursing team if you are worried about falling.