

MOVING AROUND SAFELY IN HOSPITAL

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS, FAMILIES AND CARERS

We want you to be as safe as possible in hospital

During your stay, staff will talk to you about:

- your risk of falling
- how much assistance you need when you are moving around
- ways to prevent falls in hospital.

Falls in hospital

There are many reasons you may be at risk of falling in hospital:

- Being unwell and in an unfamiliar place
- Poor mobility and balance (unsafe when walking)
- Badly fitting footwear and clothing
- Poor eyesight
- Urgent need to go to the toilet
- Medications that cause drowsiness or dizziness.

Most falls in hospital happen when people are moving around, including:

- Getting out of bed
- Walking, especially to the toilet
- In bathrooms and toilets
- Bending over or reaching for personal items.

Please tell a staff member if:

- You are worried about falling
- You have had a recent fall or have had a fall in hospital before
- You feel dizzy or unwell
- You need help walking or with things like showering and dressing
- You have problems with your balance
- You need to go to the toilet urgently
- You don't feel safe or comfortable moving around.

Tips for getting around safely:

- Check with a staff member if it is safe to move around on your own
- Use your call bell and keep it in easy reach
- Use a walking stick or frame if this has been recommended for you
- Wear supportive, non-slip shoes or slippers
- Get up slowly from sitting or lying down
- Be alert for any spills or obstacles.

Bathroom safety tips:

- A staff member may need to stay with you for your safety.
- Sit down to shower and use the rails to get up off the chair or toilet.
- Remain seated in the bathroom and use the call bell if you need help moving around.



Carers, family and visitors

We know many carers and family members provide support to patients in their home environment. However, there may be risks associated with hospital environment and the patient being unwell. Please speak with a member of the health care team, such as nurse, physiotherapist or occupational therapist if you would like to keep helping while the person you care for is in hospital.

Carers, family and visitors can help by:

- Telling staff if you notice any changes in the patient's condition
- Making sure the patient can reach their call bell and personal items
- Reminding the patient to ask the nurse for help before getting up
- Telling the nurse before leaving if the patient is experiencing any confusion so that additional safety measures can be taken.



For further information on the NSW Falls Prevention Program, please visit:

<http://www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au/patient-safety-programs/adult-patient-safety/falls-prevention>

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