

Fall Prevention for New Moms: In the Hospital

After months of carrying your baby, you finally get to meet him. Congratulations. There are a lot of things to think about after giving birth—but the risk of falling and hurting yourself in the hospital usually isn't high on that list.

However, after the hard work of delivering your baby, you are at higher risk of falling and hurting yourself. Just some of the things that can increase that risk include: Having an epidural or other pain medication; Having a C-Section; Excess blood loss or low blood pressure; Conditions like obesity or depression.

But the biggest risk of all is just being exhausted. After delivering your baby, even simple things can be more difficult than you expected. Even walking through your delivery room can pose a falling hazard, especially if there are cables on the floor.

You may even be at a higher risk of falling on the second day after delivery, after spending the first night waking up with your newborn. The good news is there are simple things you can do reduce your risk of falling and hurting yourself. The most important is to be aware of your own limits and ask for help when you need it! Your healthcare team is there to help you.

To be extra safe, try following these tips: Before you get out of bed, try sitting on the bedside for a few minutes with your feet dangling. This will allow any spells of dizziness to pass before you stand up. Use side rails and handrails when walking, especially at first. Don't try to navigate a dark room on your own. Ask for help! Avoid taking a hot shower immediately after delivery. This may increase your risk of passing out in the shower stall and falling.

Climbing in and out of bed or transferring your baby to her bassinet can also increase your risk of falling. When you're ready to transfer your baby, ask for help, especially at first.

"If you're not feeling comfortable to get up and move the baby from holding to the bassinette we want you to use that call light, use your phone, utilize us, call your nurse so we can help or a spouse that's in the room can help."

Your hospital can also take steps to make sure you stay safe. These include: Keeping cables and cords organized and pathways clear of furniture and clutter; Quickly cleaning up any spills and clearly marking wet floors; Making sure the rails on your bed are raised and the bed brakes are engaged, so your bed is more stable.

It's also important to make sure your delivery room is well lit. A dimly lit room can make it harder to see things at floor level and increase your risk of falling.

Most importantly, you and the hospital must work together to prevent the risk of falling so you can enjoy taking your newborn home.