

Preventing Falls in the Hospital

Preventing a fall when you're in the hospital is a top priority for your hospital care team and for you.

That's because a fall can cause lots of problems.

It can even lead to a longer hospital stay.

There are many reasons why falls are more likely to happen while you're in the hospital.

Anesthesia and some medicines can cause dizziness.

And you may be weak from an illness or surgery.

Bandages, splints, and casts can make it hard to move.

It's easy to trip over an I.V. line or oxygen tube.

And unfamiliar surroundings can affect your ability to get around safely.

Your nurse and the hospital staff will do everything they can to prevent you from falling.

There are things you can do, too, to lower your risk.

The hospital staff is here to help you.

Use the nurse call button to ask for help every time before you get up.

This is important, even if you don't usually need help at home.

Don't try to get up on your own unless your nurse has said that it's safe for you to do so.

If your nurse has said it's okay, go slowly and in stages.

Start by sitting on the side of your bed or at the edge of your chair, with your feet on the floor.

Wait for a bit to make sure that you don't feel dizzy or lightheaded.

Then slowly stand up.

If you feel dizzy, weak, or lightheaded, don't get up. Call the nurse for help.

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Before you get up, make sure the lights are on in your room so you can see clearly.

And put on your eyeglasses if you use them.

Check that medical tubing and equipment are out of the way.

And make sure your bed is in a lowered position with the wheels locked.

Ask your nurse if you need help with any of this.

Hospital floors can be slippery.

Always wear nonskid socks, slippers, or shoes when you're out of bed.

And let your nurse know if something spills on the floor.

If you use a walker or a cane, make sure it's within reach before you get up.

If you didn't bring your walker or cane to the hospital, let the staff know.

They can provide one for you to use during your stay.

Use the provided handrails in your hospital room, bathroom, and hallways.

Don't use your I.V. pole to steady yourself.

And don't use an I.V. pole in place of a walker or cane.

When you're in bed, keep the things you need close by.

This includes things like your phone, glasses, and the nurse call button.

Ask for help if something you need is out of reach.

Your safety is very important to your hospital care team.

And preventing falls is a vital part of helping you stay safe while you're in the hospital.