

Patient information factsheet

Reducing patient falls

Advice for patients, relatives and carers

Just like in life, it is not always possible to prevent all falls from happening. However, we are committed to reducing the risk of patient falls in hospital as much as possible.

You can help us to reduce your risk of falling during your hospital stay by following the points in the checklist below. Show this to your loved ones, visitors and carers, as they may be able to help too.

Preventing falls checklist

	<input type="checkbox"/> Tell the nurse or doctor looking after you if you have fallen in the last year, are worried about falling, or have a history of falls.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Use your call bell if you need help to move, especially if you need help going to the toilet.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Make sure your glasses are clean and used as prescribed. Ask for help if you are having trouble seeing.
	<input type="checkbox"/> If you use a walking aid, keep it close by and check for wear and tear on the rubber feet. Never lean on hospital furniture as it's often on wheels.
	<p>When getting up:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> sit upright for a few moments on the edge of your bed before standing. <input type="checkbox"/> get up slowly and make sure you feel steady before walking.

	<p>Do some simple leg exercises before getting up from your bed or chair:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> point your toes and release a few times.<input type="checkbox"/> tighten the muscles in your calves and then release them.<input type="checkbox"/> move your legs up and down if you can, to get the circulation going.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> If you feel dizzy – stop, sit down, and let the ward staff know.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Drink regularly and eat well if you can.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure you are familiar with your bedside environment. Ask for clutter to be moved if your path isn't clear.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Make sure your shoes or slippers fit well, grip well and cannot fall off.<input type="checkbox"/> If you do not have suitable shoes with you, or struggle to put them on yourself, we can give you some non-slip socks to use indoors.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Take care in the bathroom and toilet. Ask for help if you need assistance.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> It is also important to make sure that you receive a falls risk assessment. You can read more about this on the next page. Please ask if you would like more information on this.

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Falls assessment

Some people are more vulnerable to falls and injuries.

You will have a personalised assessment to help keep you safe. This may look at things like:

- how you move around and whether you need any assistance from staff or equipment
- the type of bed you need, and its height and positioning
- whether side rails or a crash mat on the floor should be used
- the type of supervision or observation you would benefit from
- whether your blood pressure changes when you stand up.

We will do all we can to try to reduce your chance of falling during your hospital admission. If there is anything you think we should know to help keep you safe, please tell your health care professional.

Further information

For further information about falls prevention please speak to a member of staff on the ward.

Useful links

You may also find the information on the following websites useful:

Age UK – www.ageuk.org.uk

Royal College of Physicians – www.rcplondon.ac.uk

National Osteoporosis Society – www.nos.org.uk

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For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital, please visit **www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalneeds**