

# FALL PREVENTION AT HOME

As hospital length of stay has decreased, the post-hospitalization period represents a high-risk time for falls. Below are more guidelines for fall prevention at home:

- Turn on the lights when you enter a room. Do not walk in the dark. Install timers, “clap-on” or motion sensors on your lights.
- Keep the floor and stairs clear of objects such as books, tools, papers, shoes and clothing.
- Use the handrails on staircases
- Sit in chairs to help when you sit down. and stand up.
- Wear shoes that have firm, flat, non-slip soles. Do not wear shoes that have backs on them.
- Replace the rubber tips on canes and walkers when they become worn.
- Use night lights in your bedroom, bathroom and the hallway leading to the bathroom.
- Remove small area rugs and throw rugs that can slip. Rubber mats are a good replacement.
- Put frequently used items in easy-to-reach places that do not require using a step stool.
- Make sure your bed is easy to get in and out of.
- Apply non-slip treads on stairs, non-slip decals or use a non-slip mat in the bathtub or shower.
- Install grab bars near the toilet and the bathtub or shower.

*A home care agency personal care and support agency, or community program may be able to help make changes to your home if you live alone and need help.*



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**FALL PREVENTION GUIDELINES**  
Patient and Family



## WHY FALLS HAPPEN

Falls may occur in the hospital because:

- Medications such as sedatives, sleeping medication, pain relievers, blood pressure medications or diuretics may make you dizzy or disoriented.
- Your illness, enemas, laxatives, long periods without food, or test your physician has ordered may leave you weak and unsteady.
- The hospital may seem foreign or unfamiliar to you especially when you wake up at night.
- Some falls, such as those associated with illness or therapy cannot be avoided; however, by following safety guidelines, you and your family can help reduce your risk of falling.

## SAFETY GUIDELINES

Preventing Falls

- ALWAYS call for assistance and wait for the nurse or assistant to arrive to help you.
- Remain lying or seated until assistance arrives. Please be patient. Someone will answer your call as promptly as possible.
- Ask for assistance if you feel dizzy or weak. Remember, you are more likely to faint or feel dizzy after sitting or lying for a long time.
- Always walk slowly and carefully. Do not look down at your feet. Do not lean or support yourself on rolling objects such as IV poles or your bedside table.
- Always wear non-slip shoes when out of bed. The hospital will supply you with non-slip shoes during your admission.
- Always follow your nurse's and physician's order regarding assistance to go to the bathroom.

## FAMILY AND FRIENDS

- Because hospital staff members cannot remain constantly at a patient's bedside, you may want to have a family stay with the patient (for private rooms only) or you may wish to arrange for private-duty assistance.
- Whenever possible, please advise the staff of any concerns regarding your family member.

## FALL PREVENTION

- Accidental falls may occur in the hospital. These accidents are as distressing to hospital personnel as they are to the patient.
- Our healthcare team of nurses, physicians and ancillary staff are here to assist you in a safe and speedy recovery.

