Minimising the risk of falls in hospital

Just like in general life, it is not possible to prevent all falls in hospital. However by working together we can reduce the chances of this happening.

Advice for patients, relatives and carers

- Tell the nurse looking after you if you have had any falls in the last year and if you use anything at home to reduce the risk of falls as we may be able to use these measures during your stay in the hospital.
- Use the nurse call bell for assistance if you feel weak, unsteady, dizzy, anxious or have been advised to have assistance when moving or walking.
- Keep everything you need within easy reach.
- If you use glasses or hearing aids please ensure you have them with you.
- If you usually use a walking aid but you do not have it with you please inform the nurse looking after you.
- If you are supplied with any walking aids during your stay please use them.
- Wear non-slip, well fitting, enclosed slippers or shoes. If you do not have these with you a pair of anti-slip slipper socks can be provided by the nursing staff.
- If you wish to wear bed socks we advise the use of ones with grips on the soles.
- If you are required to wear anti-embolic stockings you will be supplied with a pair of anti-slip slipper socks to wear over these. Please wear them at all time as anti-embolic stockings provide no grip on the hospital floors.
- To help prevent you tripping, wear clothes that are not too long or too loose.
- Ask your relatives or carers to take items home that you do not need in order to reduce bedside clutter.
- Don’t use hospital furniture for support as it is often on wheels.
- When getting up from lying or sitting, get up slowly making sure you feel steady before walking. If you feel dizzy – stop, sit down and let the nursing staff know.
- Report any problems such as spills, trailing wires or cables to staff.
- Please listen to any advice given to you and let the nursing staff know your wishes if these differ from the advice given.
- We strongly discourage patients from having bedside curtains drawn at night as nursing staff need to be able to see patients easily.
- If you are visiting and the nursing staff make any adjustments to the measures in place to minimise the risk of falls such as taking down bedrails, raising the bed level or switching on a falls alarm, please let them know before you leave so these can be put back in place.
Please remember

All measures that are taken are designed to minimise the risk of falling whilst in hospital. However we cannot restrain patients or deprive them of their liberty, unless deprivation of liberty safeguards are in place. We will always adhere to patients’ wishes, or act in their best interests if they are unable to express their wishes. Some patients will still fall even if we have put in all appropriate measures, however, by working together with patients, their relatives and carers, we aim to minimise the risk of falls.

Further information

If you have any questions or concerns regarding falls or would like any further information please ask the ward staff or contact the falls prevention co-ordinator on extension 274403 or call direct on 01223 274403.

We are now a smoke-free site: smoking will not be allowed anywhere on the hospital site.
For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169.

Other formats:

If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio, please ask the department where you are being treated, to contact the patient information team: patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk.
Please note: We do not currently hold many leaflets in other languages; written translation requests are funded and agreed by the department who has authored the leaflet.