
MOVING AROUND SAFELY IN HOSPITAL

KEEPING OUR PATIENTS SAFE

We want you to be as safe as possible during your stay with us. If you fall in hospital, it may lead to an injury resulting in a longer stay.

While you are at Cabrini, staff will talk to you about:

- Your risk of falling
- How much assistance you need when you are moving around
- Ways to prevent falls in hospital



FALLS IN HOSPITAL

Falls can happen to people with walking aids or people who do not use aids, regardless of age.

There are many reasons you may be at risk of falling in hospital:

- Being unwell and in an unfamiliar place
- Poor balance and mobility (unsafe when walking)
- Badly fitting footwear
- Poor eyesight
- Urge to go to the toilet
- Medications that cause drowsiness or dizziness

Most falls in hospital happen when patients are moving around, including:

- Getting out of bed
- Walking (in unfamiliar surroundings)
- In bathrooms and toilets
- Bending over or reaching for personal items

TALK TO US

Please tell a staff member if:

- You are worried about falling
- You have had a recent fall or have had a fall in hospital before
- You feel dizzy or unwell
- You need help walking or with things like showering and dressing
- You have problems with your balance
- You need to go to the toilet
- You don't feel safe or comfortable moving around



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SAFETY TIPS

Tips for getting around safely:

- Check with a staff member if it is safe to move around on your own
- Use your call bell to ask staff for help when needed
- Keep frequently used items within easy reach including call bell, phone, glasses etc
- Use a walking stick or frame if this has been recommended for you
- Wear supportive, non-slip soled flat shoes
- Do not walk in socks or surgical stockings without non-slip soles
- Stand up slowly from sitting or lying down
- Wear your glasses and/or hearing aids (if required)
- Be alert for any spills or obstacles – if you do notice anything that may be a hazard, tell your nurse or another staff member as soon as possible

Bathroom safety tips:

- A staff member may need to stay with you for your safety in the bathroom
- Sit down to shower and use the rails to get up off the chair or toilet
- If you need help moving around, use the call bell in the bathroom and remain seated until your nurse or another staff member arrives

If you do have a fall, do not attempt to get up on your own. Press the call bell if in reach, call out and wait for help.



A MESSAGE FOR FAMILY, CARERS AND VISITORS

We know many family members and carers provide support to patients in their home environment. When the patient is unwell and moves from their home to the unfamiliar hospital setting, there is potentially a greater risk of falls.

Family, carers and visitors can help their loved one in hospital by:

- Ensuring the patient has appropriate footwear and has their glasses/hearing aid if required
- Advising staff if any changes in the patient's condition are noticed
- Making sure the patient can reach their call bell and personal items
- Reminding the patient to ask the nurse for help before getting up
- Telling the nurse before leaving if the patient is experiencing any confusion so that additional safety measures can be taken

Please speak to a member of staff for further information on how you can support your loved one while they are in hospital.

WHEN YOU GO HOME

It is also important to reduce your risk of falling at home. The team caring for you may:

- Give you an information sheet 'Post fall care and fall prevention at home' (please ask for a copy if you are interested)
- Recommend that you use rails or equipment to help you move around safely at home
- Refer you to a Falls Prevention Program, such as Cabrini's Falls and Balance Program (please call (03) 9508 1700 for more information) or another service in the community

If you would like any more information on how you can prevent falls at home, please speak to a member of your healthcare team.

Acknowledgement: The information in this sheet has been adapted from 'Moving around safely in hospital, information for patients, families and carers' produced by the Clinical Excellence Commission, February 2017.

