



With your help we hope to
make this a safer visit

Preventing a Fall in Hospital

A guide for Patients and Carers.

Falls in hospital can be serious
as they can lead to injuries
and a longer hospital stay



MATER HOSPITAL
A FACILITY OF
ST VINCENT'S
HEALTH AUSTRALIA

Preventing falls in Hospital

Checklist for Carers/Relatives

Please bring in for the patient:

- Well fitting, non-slip shoes or slippers
- Usual glasses
- Usual walking aid as requested
- Hearing aid and spare batteries
- Nightwear that is above ankle length

Falls in hospital happen

- **mostly** around the bed
- getting to the toilet
- in bathrooms and toilets
- during the busy times of the day and late at night
- when you might be trying to do things for yourself rather than waiting for help
- when you are moving around your room without your walking aid

Falls Risk Assessment

When you are admitted the staff will complete a checklist with you or your carer to see if you are at risk of falling.

The checklist covers:

- walking
- medications
- history of falls
- eyesight
- memory and thinking problems
- bladder and bowel habits
- Red non-slip socks will be provided
- A review may be undertaken by an occupational therapist.

- A falls prevention plan will be developed, in partnership with you and your family, if you are assessed as 'high risk'.*

** You will be asked to sign a High Falls Risk Management Plan and education will be given to you if you are 'high risk'.*

What does this mean?

We will discuss ways with you and your carer that can reduce the chances of you having a fall.

Visitors can help too by making sure that when they leave, your bedside is clear, your call bell is easy to reach, and any extra chairs are returned.

Falls risk identification



This sign, sticker or magnet displayed outside your room means we think you are at risk of having a fall.



These alert staff, carers and visitors to be aware that you probably need help with walking and daily activities in the ward.

Top Tips to preventing a fall

- Use your call bell and keep it in easy reach
- Take your time when getting up
- Let staff know if you feel unwell or unsteady on your feet
- If unsteady, ask for help to get out of bed, and to go to the toilet
- Do not grab onto anything unstable for support
- Wear supportive shoes/slippers — no scuffs or thongs
- Keep your walking aid within reach
- Watch out for spills or obstacles
- Do not walk in surgical stockings or socks without shoes or safe slippers
- Nightwear should be above the ankles to avoid tripping
- Wear your glasses if needed
- Sit down to shower and use the rails to get off the chair or the toilet
- If you feel unsafe in the bathroom, remain seated and use the call bell
- **If you do have a fall — do not get up on your own. Wait for help.**



If you do have a fall

- The staff will try to identify what caused your fall to reduce the risk of you having another one.
- You may be seen by a Doctor, and staff will repeat some or all of your falls risk checklist.
- This may mean changes being made to your care to make you safer.
- We will talk to you and your carer about any changes.
- A review will be undertaken by an occupational therapist.

Preventing falls at Home

Preventing falls is important when you go home as well. Before you leave the hospital, you may be referred for further review or services to make you safer at home.

Who can help to prevent falls at home?

- Your local Doctor
- Community Nurse
- Physiotherapist
- Occupational Therapist
- Pharmacist
- Optometrist
- Podiatrist
- Community Services



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The Mater Hospital would like to acknowledge Northern Sydney Central Coast Area Health Service for allowing reproduction of their information brochure "Preventing a fall in hospital".

**active &
HEALTHY**

www.activeandhealthy.nsw.gov.au

The Active and Healthy website can help you find an exercise program in your area and provides information and tools that can assist you to increase your physical activity and help prevent falls.



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