

Reducing your risk of falling during a hospital stay

Patient Experience Team

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Information for Patients, Families & Carers

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Introduction

Many people can be at high risk of falling when they are in hospital due to feeling weak and being in an unfamiliar environment.

While you are in hospital we will make every effort to reduce your chances of falling. All patients identified as being at risk of falling will have an individual falls care plan. This will also identify actions you need to follow while you are in hospital to reduce your risk of falls.

This leaflet contains information and practical advice to help keep you safe and reduce your chances of falling.

What can be done to reduce falls?

The following advice can be used by patients, their carers and families to reduce the risk of falling whilst in hospital.



Tell your nurse or doctor if you have had any falls in the past year or if you have been feeling dizzy, or having problems with your ears or hearing loss that may make your chances of falling higher.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

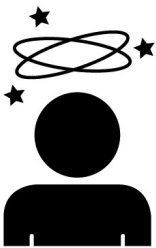


Please bring your hearing aids and glasses to hospital and make sure they are in good working condition. Make an appointment to have an eye test after leaving hospital if you are concerned about poor vision.



If you use any walking aids, keep it close by. Make sure they are in good working condition with no wear or tear on the rubber feet.

Never lean on hospital furniture or use them to help you walk, as they can be unsteady and move unexpectedly if it has wheels.

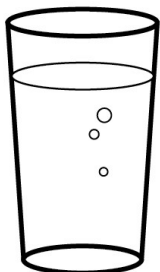


If you feel dizzy, stop, sit down and let staff know. Problems with ears can affect your balance and increase your risk of falls.

If you notice changes in your hearing are affecting your day to day life, arrange to see your GP after you leave hospital if you are concerned. Problems like an ear infection or a build up of wax can easily be treated.



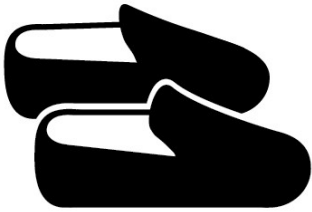
It is important to keep an eye on your appetite whilst in hospital. Even though you may not feel like eating, it is better to eat something even if it's small snacks during the day. Getting enough energy is important in keeping up your strength and preventing falls. Make sure you eat and drink unless you have been advised not to by a member of staff.



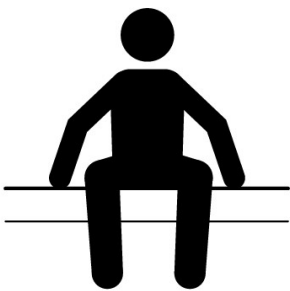
As well as eating a balanced meal, you should make sure you are drinking plenty of fluids. If you don't drink enough, it is likely you will start to feel lightheaded, which will increase your risk of falling. Try to drink 6 to 8 glasses of fluids each day.



Certain medications can make you feel faint, dizzy or lightheaded and may affect how you usually feel. Let your doctor know if you experience any side effects like these when taking your medication.



Bring your shoes to hospital; make sure they fit well, have a good grip and cannot fall off. We will provide you with non-slip socks. Please remember not to walk bare footed whilst in hospital. **Do not walk in surgical stockings.**



When getting up from bed:

- Sit upright for a few minutes on the edge of your bed before standing up fully.
- Get up slowly and make sure you feel steady before walking.
- Make sure any dizziness resolves before you attempt to move.



Be familiar with your bedside space. Ask for clutter to be moved from your bedside and walking paths. If possible ask for items you do not need to be taken home.



If you have a catheter inserted, make sure it is not on the floor while walking to prevent you from tripping. Always ask staff for support to secure it.



There are call bells by each bedside and in the toilet. Always ask for help by using your call bell, especially if you need to go to the toilet.

Take care in the toilet and bathroom. A member of staff may ask to stay with you to reduce your chances of falling in the toilet.

Exercises to strengthen your legs

Here are some simple exercises you can do from a chair to help strengthen your legs and reduce your risk of falling. Always begin all exercises sitting in a sturdy chair and sit forward away from the back of the chair:



1. Chair marching

- Lift your knees up one at a time and swing your arms.
- Do this for 30 seconds, then rest for 30 seconds.
- Repeat 3 times.



2. Ankle movements

- Bring your toes up towards you, leaving your heels on the floor and then lower your toes and lift your heels up off the floor.
- Do this for 30 seconds, then rest for 30 seconds.
- Repeat 3 times.



3. Leg extension

Slowly lift your right leg out straight, bringing your toes up towards you. Hold for 5 seconds, and then lower. Repeat on each leg. Only do 1 leg at a time.

Level 1: 5 times each leg.

Level 2: 10 times each leg.

Level 3: 15 times each leg.



4. Sit to stand

- Sit at the front edge of the chair, with your feet and knees apart, toes pointing forwards and feet pulled back slightly.
 - Lean forwards and stand up, stretch up tall.
Make sure the backs of your legs are against the chair and then slowly lower yourself into the chair without flopping back down.
- Level 1: 5 times in a row pushing with your arms.
Level 2: 10 times in a row pushing with your arms.
Level 3: 15 times in a row without using your arms.

Further information

Preventing falls is important when you are discharged from hospital as well.

- Age UK offer advice on strength and balance exercises to prevent falls. The telephone number for Age UK Leicestershire and Rutland is **0116 299 2233**.
- The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland leaflet on preventing falls is available here <http://www.healthandcareleicestershire.co.uk/preventingfalls/>

Contact details

For more information on how to reduce falls in hospital, contact the Falls Safety Team or Patient Experience on 0116 258 5384.

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل

જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

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Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk