

Preventing Falls

Information for patients,
carers and relatives



In Leeds Teaching Hospitals, we want to offer you a safe hospital journey. Please use this leaflet as guidance for staying safe and preventing a fall.

Being in a new environment and feeling unwell can make you more likely to fall. This is true for everyone.

In our hospitals, we consider anyone over 65 years old to be at risk of falling, but younger people can also be at risk.

Falls are physically and physiologically traumatic events that can reduce your quality of life, resulting in harm such as fractures or internal bleeding, or making you feel worried or scared of falling again.

The risk of you (or your family, friends or carers) falling can be reduced if you take the following advice:

Arrival at hospital

On your arrival at one of our hospitals, a nurse will ask you if you have any history of falls, with questions such as: ***have you fallen before? Are you worried about falling? Do you feel dizzy upon standing?***

The nurse will assess your current risk of falling and a plan of care will be made with you, to minimise the risk. This plan may include timed checks, advice regarding footwear, supervision and other types of interventions. You may be given anti-slip socks to wear.

Please call, don't fall!

Remember to ask to the nurse for the call bell if you can't find it. Please press the call bell when you feel that your balance/walking is impaired or if you are asked to do so. A nurse will come and help you.



Do not attempt activities on your own unless agreed with the team looking after you.

I need to go...

If you need a mobility aid such as a walking stick or frame, make sure this is within your reach and use it at all times when moving around. This will reduce your risk of falling.

Take special care in the bathrooms and toilets. **Ask for help if you need assistance.**

Never lean on hospital furniture as it may be on wheels and could move unexpectedly.

If you don't have your mobility aid with you, you can:

- Ask one of the nurses or therapists to provide you with the mobility aid you need
- Ask a family member or friend to bring yours in from home.

Footwear

Always wear correct and well-fitting footwear when walking. Footwear with a low heel is advised. Avoid backless and slip-on shoes.

If you have come in hospital without any suitable footwear you can:

- Ask the nurses to provide you with yellow anti-slip socks
- Ask a family member or friend to bring footwear in for you.



Anti-slip socks

If you feel dizzy

Follow these steps to manage the dizziness:

1. Stop,
2. Sit down
3. Tell the nursing staff of your symptoms

Please remember it is always important to **'sit up, get dressed and keep moving'** every day, while in hospital and at home

When getting up

- Sit upright for a few moments on the edge of your bed before standing
- Get up slowly and make sure you feel steady before walking.
- Do some simple leg exercises before getting up from your bed or chair:
 - point your toes and then release them a few times
 - tighten the muscles in your calves and then release them
 - move your legs up and down if you can, to get the circulation going.

Other things to do to reduce the risk of falling

- Be familiar with your bedside environment. Ask for clutter to be moved if your path isn't clear
- Make sure any glasses and hearing aids that you use are clean and used as prescribed. Ask for help if you are having trouble with your eyesight
- Ask your family, friends or carers to take any belongings that you don't need away with them.

Please help us to keep you as safe as possible



What did you think of your care?

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Your views matter



© Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust • 4th edition (Ver 1)
Developed by: Luca Marinannio, Senior Charge Nurse, Professional Practice
Standards & Safety Team
Design by Medical Illustration Services • MID Code 20230308_008/NR

LN001538
Publication date
08/2023
Review date
08/2026