

Care Team Support

Staff:

- Apply the Universal S.A.F.E. Fall Precautions - A core set of fall prevention and injury reduction principles that applies to all patients in all care settings, regardless of fall risk.
- Provide orientation to the room, ward, and hospital.
- Provide instruction for call bell use.
- Ensure the call bell, your personal items, and mobility aids are within reach.
- Provide hourly checks, at a minimum, to ensure all needs are met.
- Address any environmental hazards to ensure a safe environment.
- Adjust bed height to the optimal level so you can safely get in and out of bed.
- Frequently assess your risk of falling.
- Provide information about falls, fall risk factors, and fall-related injuries.
- Work with you to develop a plan to prevent falls and fall-related injuries.
- Make referrals to other health care professionals to help you move safely and improve your health.
- Assist you with walking as needed.
- Assist in getting all necessary and appropriate equipment.

We all have a role to play to prevent falls and fall related injuries!



If You See a Falling Star...

The falling star icon identifies that a patient is at a high risk of falling.



If you are at a high risk of falling, do not walk or get out of bed on your own. If you see someone needing help, please notify the care team immediately.



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Please talk to your healthcare team if you have any questions.

The Saskatchewan Health Authority works in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, acknowledging Saskatchewan as the traditional territory of First Nations and Métis People.



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Healthy People, Healthy Saskatchewan



Fall Prevention

Adult Inpatient



Image courtesy of SHA Communications



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What is a Fall?

The Saskatchewan Health Authority defines a fall as any unintentional change in position where the person ends up on the floor, ground, or other lower level, with or without an injury. This includes falls that occur while being assisted by others.

What is a Near Fall?

A near fall is a sudden loss of balance that does not result in a fall. This includes a person who slips, stumbles, or trips but is able to regain control prior to falling.

Why Should I be Concerned About Falls?

Patient falls are one of the most common causes of injury in hospitals.

Falls account for 40% of hospital accidents, with up to 26% of those resulting in serious injury.

Approximately 30% of patients that fall and fracture their hip will die from this injury.

Injuries from falls can result in a longer hospital stay and increased stress for patients, families and staff.

Risk Factors

There are over 400 fall risk factors. The most common fall risk factors are:

- History of falling
- Fear of falling
- Acute illness
- Chronic illness
- Bowel and bladder problems
- Multiple medications
- Medication side effects
- Pain
- Weakness and/or poor balance
- Difficulty walking
- Changes to mental status
- Poor nutrition
- Poor hydration
- Unsafe use of a mobility aid
- Using the wrong type of mobility aid
- Inappropriate footwear
- Clutter such as medical equipment and devices, oxygen tubing, catheter bags, and personal belongings can create a tripping hazard
- Intravenous (IV) and IV equipment can make mobilizing difficult

Movement and exercise during your hospital stay will help to maintain strength and prevent falls. Some movement is better than no movement at all.

How to Stay Safe

- Inform your care team of:
 - Any falls,
 - Any history of falling,
 - Any weakness or dizziness,
 - Any environmental hazards, i.e.: spills on the floor, poor lighting.
- Be cautious when walking during your recovery from a procedure or anesthetic.
- Use the call bell to ask for help, such as if you need assistance going to the bathroom.
- Use brakes on all equipment.
- Wear non-skid footwear or socks.
- Follow staff direction for physical activity i.e.: walking or bed exercises.
- Keep pathways clear of any clutter.
- Keep personal belongings within reach.
- Ask family or friends for support.
- Ask questions:
 - What are my fall risk factors?
 - When is it safe to walk?
 - Can I walk on my own?
 - Do I need any special equipment to walk safely?
 - How do I use the equipment provided?
 - How do I call for help?