



AVOIDING FALL HAZARDS IN THE HOSPITAL INFORMATION FOR FAMILY & FRIENDS

At the UVAHS we have a “Fall Prevention Program” because we are concerned about keeping patients from falling. In the hospital the risk for a fall increases because of weakness, new medicines, or because the environment is different than at home. A fall can mean pain, suffering, slower healing or a longer hospital stay. We want you to know what we are doing to lower the chances of a fall and what family and friends can do to help:

AVOIDING FALL HAZARDS

- Encourage the patient to ask for help when needed.
- Decrease clutter in the room.
- Keep the bed at its lowest level when staff are not in the room and keep it locked in place.
- Follow the doctor’s orders for activity level
- Report any spills or other safety risks to staff right away.
- Make sure the patient has a cane, walker, glasses, or other devices they use at home.
- Using the top two side rails can help the patient move in bed. Using all four side rails can increase the chance of injury from a fall.
- If you are helping a patient with special needs, please let staff know if you need help with moving the patient or when you leave.

FALL RISK PRECAUTIONS

- We assess every patient to see if they are at a higher risk for falling.
- If a patient has a history of falling; problems with balance, movement, ability to think clearly, getting to the bathroom: or are taking medicines that cause dizziness we take special care.
- We use pink signs and armband to remind all staff that the patient is at higher risk to take special safety measures.
- We work together to make a plan just for the patient. This plan may include:
 - putting an alarm on the bed to let us know if the patient is trying to get up,
 - checking on the patient and offering the bathroom more often,
 - taking special safety measures when the patient is out of bed,
 - having the pharmacy review the patient’s meds.
- We **do not** use restraints just to keep people from falling. Restraints have their own risks and are used only by doctor’s order. To learn more about restraints, please ask for the “Understanding Restraints” information sheet.

Please help us keep the hospital safe for all!