



# Watch your step

**A guide to help you reduce  
your risk of falling in hospital**

**PRHC**

Peterborough Regional  
Health Centre

Guided by you · Doing it right · Depend on us  
[www.prhc.on.ca](http://www.prhc.on.ca)



**Remember:  
Call - Don't Fall.**

**Your safety is important to us. Falling and any injuries that occur can affect your independence and well-being. Your healthcare team will work with you and your caregiver to make a plan that reduces your risk of falling.**

## **Our team will assess your level of falls risk.**

We will ask you questions that will help us determine your level of risk, some of our questions include:

- Have you ever fallen before?
- Do you have a medical condition that increases your risk of falling?
- Are you unsteady when you walk (sometimes or all of the time)?
- Do you feel dizzy, tired, or weak?
- Do you use a mobility aid, such as a wheelchair, walker, cane, or crutches?
- Do you take many medications each day (more than three (3))?

## **Tell your care team if...**

- You think you are at risk of falling
- You have trouble walking, or slip and fall often
- You use any of the following



EYE  
GLASSES



HEARING  
AIDS



CANE, WALKER  
OR WHEELCHAIR

## **We will work with you to create a plan to prevent falls and fall injuries**

### **Keep the environment safe and clear.**

- Tell staff if you see a spill to ensure it is cleaned up quickly
- Making sure you have enough light, ask for help in locating overbed lights, or ask to leave your washroom light on at night
- Keeping your bed low to the floor and the brakes on
- Keeping your room, doorway, and hallway clutter free and free from tripping hazards
- Ask staff for help moving if you have IV lines or tubes



## While in the hospital

- Keep important things within your reach
- Tell your healthcare team if you have a fear of falling or are worried about falling
- Tell the team if you have a history of falling
- If you feel dizzy, weak, unsteady or light-headed, sit down and call for help
- Get up slowly after lying down or resting
- Let the team know about your normal home routines, tell them how you were walking at home
- Wear proper footwear: non-slip, well-fitting and supportive shoes, such as running shoes or slippers, or request hospital provided non-slip socks
- Wear glasses and/or hearing aids if needed
- Take medications as prescribed, and while in hospital do not take any over the counter medications without asking your healthcare team
- Remember to use walking aids and supports
- Make sure your clothing (such as pants, shirts and housecoats) are not too long – avoid tripping hazards
- Participate in physiotherapy and occupational therapy sessions to strengthen your muscles and balance and prevent deconditioning

**We will regularly assess your risk of falling as it may change during your stay.**





## Things that we at PRHC can do to prevent falls

- Non-slip socks
- Floor mats that can be placed at the bedside when you are in bed
- Cheater glasses or magnifying glasses if you do not have your glasses
- Hearing amplifier if you do not have hearing aids with you
- High/low beds can be requested if you are high falls risk and staff will do their best to meet your needs
- Stationary activities such as Sudoku, colouring, crosswords, daily newspaper
- Bed alarms, chair alarms for patients that may have difficulty understanding their risk for falls



## Despite our best efforts, sometimes falls will occur

PRHC follows a “least restraint, last resort” policy. Restraints are not recommended for the prevention of falls. We work hard to balance risks and benefits of preventing and reducing falls and injury from falls with a person’s freedom, dignity, and quality of life. Sometimes when we try to prevent all falls, we inadvertently disregard the patients’ right to autonomy and the level of risk they are willing to accept.

It is important to discuss your healthcare goals with your care team. We will collaborate with you to develop an individualized falls care plan, while explaining the risks and benefits of different interventions and approaches.



## Going home from hospital

If you are high risk for falls ask your healthcare team about:

- An occupational therapist safety assessment of your home
- Additional home supports prior to your discharge date
- Find out about local agencies that offer falls prevention and exercise classes both in person, and virtually



## Once discharged

- Consider the use of a medical alert system that can call for help if you experience a fall
- Take all medications as prescribed
- Have regular vision tests

Good nutrition and careful use of alcohol can also reduce your risk of falls. If you have difficulty making meals, ask your healthcare team about community agencies that can help support meals.





# Fall Prevention for Seniors

## Safety Tips



Exercise regularly



Get your vision and hearing checked



Review medications with your doctor



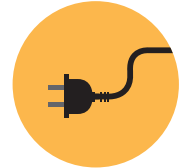
Wear well fitting shoes



## Safe Home



Install handrails and grab bars



Remove clutter and cords from floors



Use non-slip mats



Make items accessible

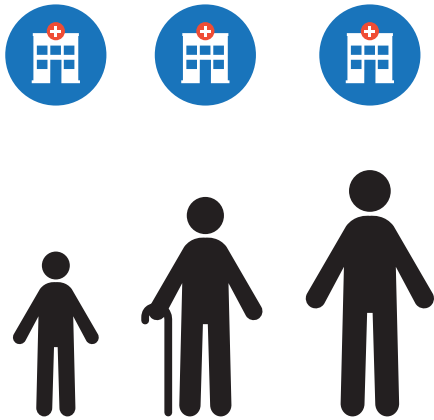


Improve lighting

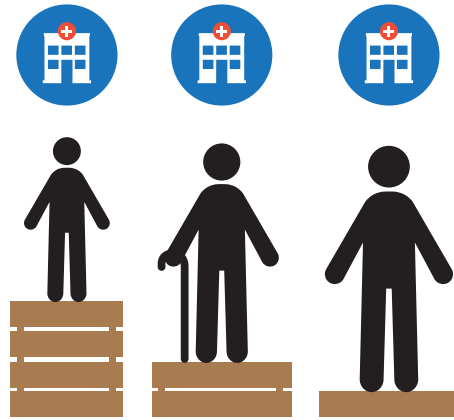
**At PRHC, we believe  
in health equity.**

Learn more about the resources  
available to you at  
[prhc.on.ca/about-us/accessibility/](http://prhc.on.ca/about-us/accessibility/)

**Equality**



**Equity**



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