

## Preventing Falls and Staying Safe while in Hospital

### Why do falls occur?

The most common reason for falls in hospital is getting out of bed instead of waiting for assistance.

When you arrive your admitting nurse will show you where everything is in your room and bathroom. After your operation you may be dizzy or weaker and less steady than you expect and therefore at risk of falling. We want to keep you safe and avoid falls and your help is needed to do this.

### What you can do

Bring the following things into hospital with you;

- Well-fitting shoes and / or slippers, preferably flat and non-slip
- Comfortable clothing, not too long, too tight or too loose
- Any walking aids you currently use, glasses and hearing aid/s if you use them

### What can you and your family do to prevent falls?

- When you are admitted, provide the attending nurses a complete history of any falls you may have had
- Become familiar with your surroundings
- Get to know your bed controls
- Keep your call bell, glasses, footwear and walking aids within easy reach and use them
- Ensure you have adequate food and water within easy reach
- Use the call bell when you want to get out of bed and wait for staff to come. Always ensure your call bell is within reach before the nurse leaves the room
- Plan your toilet needs so you do not have to rush to the bathroom at the last minute
- Understand the possible effects of medication
- Do not ask your family for help to the bathroom whilst you are staying with us, instead ask the nurse for assistance
- Keep your feet moving while sitting

### Before you get up

- Take your time to slowly get up from lying to sitting and then sitting to standing

- Put your shoes, slippers or non-slip socks on
- If wearing compression stockings please use slippers or non-slip socks to avoid slipping
- Put your glasses on if you have them

## While getting up and walking

- Get your balance before you move away from the bed or chair
- Use the walking aid that you have been given, do not use the furniture to balance in case it moves
- Watch for spills or objects in the way – make sure you tell staff about them
- Let staff know immediately if you feel unsteady
- Take your time when turning around move your feet in a circle, don't pivot on the spot
- Do not pick items up from the floor, ask a nurse for assistance

## What is Burnside Hospital doing to prevent falls and keep you safe?

- On admission the nurse will complete an assessment to ensure your needs are met to prevent falls
- Provide equipment such as handrails throughout the facility including bathrooms
- Involve allied health professionals such as physiotherapists to improve mobility to help prevent falls
- Provide equipment aids for use in hospital
- Checking for environmental hazards and fixing them
- Providing information about medications, their effects and when they are changed
- Investigating all falls to identify any opportunities to prevent further incidents happening in the future

**DISCLAIMER** This fact sheet provides general information only. For specific advice about your baby or your healthcare needs, you should seek advice from your health professional. Burnside Hospital does not accept any responsibility for loss or damage arising from your reliance on this fact sheet instead of seeing a health professional. If you require urgent medical attention, please contact your nearest emergency department.

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