

# Fall Prevention

## A Guide for Preventing Falls and Related Injuries



**All residents in long term care are at risk for falling. Here are some ways that you, your family, and your friends can help reduce the risk of falling or minimize injuries resulting from a fall.**

**Please read this pamphlet and if you have questions or concerns, do not hesitate to discuss them with the care team.**

## Bed Safety

**Potential Risks – Why side rails may not be the best solution.**

- Getting caught up in the bed rails can cause minor and major injuries.
- Climbing over the bed rails can cause a more serious injury since they create a greater distance to the ground.
- Rails may prevent able residents to perform routine activities, such as getting out bed.

## Environment

- **Room Furniture:** Please do not rely on any furniture in your room to support you. Use your walker, cane or other mobility aid. If you have difficulty using your walker in your room, please talk to the care team about rearranging your furniture. The care team is comprised of the RN, LPN, OT and PT.
- **Belongings:** Keep your personal items, including your phone, within easy reach.
- **Call Bell:** Please use your call bell to get help if you need assistance to get out of bed or a chair, or to go to the toilet. Please be patient and wait for help to arrive.
- **Bathroom:** Many falls occur when people are getting up to go to the bathroom. Ask for assistance. Use the handrails by the toilet and sink, if necessary. Take your walker into the bathroom.
- **Lighting:** Ask how to turn on the lights over your bed, in your room, and in your bathroom. Be sure to always use them.

If you would like further information regarding fall prevention, please contact a member of the Care Team.



## Keep Active

- **You need to keep mobile!** If you don't use it, you will lose it.
- **Participate in exercise and activity programs.** Check your monthly calendar for activities and times or speak to the recreation or rehabilitation departments.
- **Footwear:** Wear properly fitting shoes (walking shoes, runners, etc.) and properly fitting, non-slip slippers.
- **Mobility Aids:** The therapy staff can assess your needs and help you decide which mobility aid is best to assist you in moving around safely.
- **Sit before standing:** Sit on the edge of the bed for two to three minutes before standing. Standing up quickly can make you dizzy, particularly when you have been in bed for a long time. If you feel dizzy upon standing, gently sit back on the bed and call for assistance.

**Inform your nurse or care aide any time you experience dizziness or weakness.**

## Injury Prevention

- Hip fractures are commonly caused by falls, restricting you from performing routine activities, such as using the bathroom, and are associated with a high degree of permanent disability or even death.
- The chance of sustaining a hip fracture can be greatly reduced by wearing hip protectors.
- Falls can happen anywhere and at any time. It is recommended that hip protectors be worn at all hours.
- Hip protectors are tight fitting undergarments filled with thick pads to protect the hip joint. They reduce the risk of hip fractures by more than half.

**The OT/PT staff will assess your need for hip protectors.**