

Why Fall Prevention Matters

A fall in the hospital can slow recovery and significantly increase the length of your stay.

For adults aged 65 and older, the average hospital stay is about **11 days**. For those who experience a fall while in hospital, the average length of stay increases to **55 days**.

There's a lot we can do to help prevent falls. Your care team will work with you to reduce risks and support your recovery.

Falls Prevention at Home

Staying strong and steady is key to reducing your risk of falls at home. In BC someone is hospitalized due to a fall every 30 minutes and 40% of admissions to long-term care facilities are the result of a fall.

Visit islandhealth.ca/falls-prevention to learn practical ways to reduce fall risks and stay safe at home.

Why You Might Be at Risk of Falls When in Hospital

You may be at higher risk of falling while in hospital due to:

Health-related changes

- Recent surgery or illness,
- Increased pain
- Decreased strength
- Confusion or lack of sleep
- Urgent or increased need to use the bathroom

Mobility needs

- Not having mobility aids at your bedside or close by

Environment

- Unfamiliar surroundings
- Crowded bedside (equipment or personal items)
- Liquids or spills on the floor
- Inappropriate footwear

Medications

- Some medications may affect balance or alertness

Talk to your care team if you are concerned about falling during your hospital stay.

What You Can Do to Prevent Falls

Here are some steps you can take to help prevent falls while in hospital:

- Ask your care team if it is safe for you to get up on your own.
- Use the call bell and wait for staff if you're unsure about getting up on your own or if you've been told you need help.
- Bring your mobility aids to hospital (walker, cane, wheelchair) unless your care team has told you not to.
- Wear your prescribed glasses and hearing aids (if appropriate).
- Wear slippers or shoes with rubber, non-slip soles. If you don't have any with you, ask staff for non-slip socks.
- Notify staff of any spills or liquids on the floor.
- Move slowly, as you may feel dizzy when first sitting or standing up. Sit on the side of the bed for one minute before standing up.