

**HUGHSTON HOSPITAL**  
**FALL PREVENTION GUIDELINES FOR PATIENTS/FAMILY**

Accidental falls may occur in the hospital. These accidents are as distressing to hospital personnel as they are to the patient. Our healthcare team of nurses, doctors, physical therapists, and assistants are here to assist you in a safe and speedy recovery. Your participation and cooperation with this program will help you to prevent unnecessary injury.

**Why Falls Happen**

Falls may occur in the hospital because:

- Medications such as tranquilizers, sleeping tablets, pain relievers blood pressure pills or diuretics may make you dizzy and disoriented.
- Your illness, enemas, laxatives, long periods without food, or tests your physician has ordered may leave you weak and unsteady.
- The hospital may seem foreign and unfamiliar to you, especially when you wake up at night.
- Some falls, such as those associated with illness or therapy, cannot be avoided. However, by following the safety guidelines, you, your family, and friends can help reduce your risk of falling.

**Safety Guidelines for Preventing Falls**

- When you need assistance, use your call light by your bed or in the bathroom and wait for help to arrive.
- Remain lying or seated while waiting for assistance. Please be patient, your call will be answered as soon as possible.
- Ask the nurse for help if you feel dizzy or weak getting out of bed. Remember you are more likely to faint or feel dizzy after sitting or lying for a long time. If you must get up without waiting for help, sit in bed awhile before standing. Then rise carefully and slowly begin to walk.
- Walk slowly & carefully when out of bed. Do not support yourself on rolling objects such as IV poles or bedside table.
- It is recommended you wear rubber-soled or crepe-soled slippers or shoes whenever you walk in the hospital. If you do not presently have any, check with your nurse.
- Always follow your physician's orders and the caregiver's instructions regarding whether you must stay in bed or require assistance to go to the bathroom.

**A Special Note for Family Members and Friends**

Because hospital staff members cannot remain constantly at a patient's side, arrangements may be made for a private-duty nurse, family member, or sitter to stay with a patient.

Whenever possible, ask the nursing staff if there are specific times (for example: at sundown, 6-9 PM) when your presence would be beneficial to the patient's comfort or piece of mind.