

The Patient and Family Guide to Fall Prevention

Potential Hazards of Fall	Way to Improve and Minimize Fall
1. Clutter in walkways.	Always keep the walkways clear.
2. Oil or water spills on the floor.	Have all spills cleaned up immediately.
3. Loose rugs.	If necessary, replace with non-slip rugs.
4. Poor lighting	Maintain adequate lighting such as a night-light or bedside light.
5. Accidental fall on rising from bed that is too high.	Bed height should be low enough so your feet touch the floor when you are sitting.
6. Chair with wheels.	Use stable chairs with suitable seat height. If using a wheelchair, lock brakes before transferring.
7. Tripping on loose clothing and slippery shoes.	Wear clothing with suitable length and non-slip shoes.
8. Poor Vision.	Wear appropriate glasses. Hold onto handrail when using stairs. Do not carry too many things.
9. Inappropriate use of walking aids.	Use walking aids correctly and seek professional advice if in doubt.

Suggestions to Prevent Falls

Getting out of Bed:

- Lie on your back with both knees bent and feet flat.
- Roll onto your side toward the direction you will get out of bed.
- Bring your legs forward over the edge of the bed and lower them as you push your body up with your arms.

Getting up from sitting to standing:

- Scoot to the edge of the bed/ chair.
- Place the stronger leg slightly in back of the weaker leg.
- Place hands on armrests or on the edge of the bed.
- Lean trunk forward and press down on arms to stand up.

Stairs:

- Going up: Lead up with the stronger leg, then bring the weaker leg onto the same step, then the cane (if you use one).
- Going down: Lead down with the weaker leg first, and then lower the stronger leg onto the same step. If you use a cane, it should go down first.
- Use a handrail if available.

Using assistive devices:

- Cane: With the cane tip four inches in front and four inches to the side, the cane handle should come up to your hip joint.
- When using a cane, it is often recommended that you use it in the opposite hand of your involved side.

Walker:

- Adjust height as with cane.
- All four legs of walker should be on the ground when walking.
- Walker should be within comfortable arm's distance with elbows slightly bent. Stand tall. Avoid walking bent over.

*Prevention of fall can be addressed by exercise, home modifications, and use of appropriate walking aids. Proper posture and balance exercise can improve balance. Stretching and strengthening exercise can prevent muscle weakness and protect the joint(s).



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200 North Madison Marshall, MI 49068
269-781-4271 www.oaklawnhospital.org

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