

Tips for Parents by Parents

Preventing Slips and Falls while in the Hospital: Infants and Toddlers

Is my infant or toddler at risk for a fall?

If you can answer yes to any of these questions, your child is at risk for a fall. Please speak with your nurse.

- Does your child have any previous history of falls at home or in the hospital?
- Does your infant or toddler take any medications that can make them dizzy or drowsy? Ask your doctor or nurse if you are not sure.
- Does your child have any developmental delays, weakness, sensory problems, or difficulty walking?
- Does your infant or toddler have a history of: heart problems, vision problems, seizures, dizzy spells, musculoskeletal or orthopedic problems?
- Is your child recovering from surgery or a long illness?

How can I prevent my infant or toddler from falling while in the hospital?

- Place the call button close by so that you can reach it all times.
- Let staff know if you will leave your infant or toddler unattended
- Ask staff for help if your child has medical equipment or when they get up the first time after surgery or a procedure.
- Make sure the breaks are locked before you put your infant or toddler in and out of a crib, bassinette, isolette, bed, stroller, stretcher or wheelchair
- Make sure the pathways to the bathroom and the hallways are clear.
- Keep hospital cribs and beds in the lowest position possible while your child is in bed as they are taller than your child's bed at home
- Keep side rails up and secure **at all times** while your infant or toddler is in a crib, isolette, bed or stretcher. Please ask for help if unsure how to secure side rails.
- Have your toddler wear non-skid socks or their own rubber soled footwear when walking.
- If your toddler wears glasses, make sure they have them on before getting out of bed.

Here are some more tips to prevent slips and falls:

- Orient yourself to the new surroundings. Keep personal items, the call light, and telephone close to your infant's or toddler's bed.
- Please only use highchairs, wheelchairs, or strollers with functioning seatbelts and that have been approved by hospital staff.

- Do not share a bed with your infant or toddler.
- If you get sleepy when holding your child, please place him or her back in the crib or bed.
- Please let us know if your infant or toddler sleeps in a special crib or bed at home.
- Be aware of wet floors or garbage on the floor. Tell us if you see these things.
- Please do not allow your child to ride on the IV pole.
- Please keep your toddler from running or climbing in their room, the waiting room, playroom and all hallways.
- If siblings are visiting, please keep your eye on them at all times; please do not allow them to run around the halls.
- If uncertain about how to pick up your child with their IV tubing, or how to walk with your infant/toddler with their IV pole, please ask a nurse to show you and help.
- When in the playroom, please keep your child's IV pole nearby and make sure the IV line and plug is a safe distance from your child. If your infant or toddler is playing on the mat please keep an eye on the IV tubing.

Toddlers are busy exploring their world -- this is encouraged while in the hospital. Ask hospital staff to see a Child Life Specialist to help your infant or toddler adjust to the hospital environment. Also, feel free to speak to your nurse about holding your baby.

ABOUT THE FAC: The Komansky Center Family Advisory Council (FAC) is a group of dedicated parents and family members of pediatric patients who are committed to working with the Hospital staff and pediatric administration to provide family-centered care to all of the pediatric patients. If you would like to find out more about the Family Advisory Council, please call us at (212)746-6007.