

Tips to Prevent Slips and Falls while in the Hospital: School Age Children

Is my child at risk for a fall?

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

- Does your child have any previous history of falls at home or in the hospital?
- Does your child 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 child 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 child from falling while in the hospital?

- Place the call button close by so that your child can reach it all times.
- Let staff know if you will leave your child 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 your child gets in and out of a bed, stretcher or wheelchair.
- Go with your child to the bathroom and make sure the pathways to the bathroom and the hallways are clear.
- Keep hospital 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 child is in a bed or stretcher. Please ask for help if unsure how to secure side rails.
- Have your child wear non-skid socks or their own rubber soled footwear when walking.
- If your child wears glasses, make sure they have them on before getting out of bed.

Here are some more tips:

- Orient yourself and your child to the new surroundings. Keep personal items, the call light, and telephone close to your child's bed.
- Please only use wagons, wheelchairs or strollers with functioning seatbelts and that have been approved by hospital staff.
- Please do not share a bed with your child.

- If you get sleepy when holding child, please place your child back in bed.
- 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 child from running or climbing in their room, the waiting room, playroom, classroom 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 walk with your child with their IV pole and tubing, please ask a nurse to show you and help.
- When in the playroom or classroom please keep your child's IV pole nearby and make sure the IV tubing and plug is a safe distance from your child. If your child is playing on the mat please keep your eyes on the IV tubing. Staff can help you with this.

School age children can be busy and like exploring; please be sure they do this safely. If your child cannot come out of his or her room, please contact a Child Life Specialist who can help create a safe environment for your child while he/she is hospitalized.

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.