

Tips for Parents by Parents

Tips to Prevent Slips and Falls while in the Hospital: Teenagers

Is my teen at risk for a fall?

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

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

How can I prevent my teen from falling while in the hospital?

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

Here are some more tips:

- Orient yourself and your teen to the new surroundings. Keep personal items, the call light, and telephone close to your teen's bed.

- Please only use wheelchairs with functioning seatbelts and that have been approved by hospital staff.
- Please let us know if your teen sleeps in a special 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 teen to ride on the IV pole.
- Please keep your teen from running 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 hallways.
- If you or your teen is uncertain about how to walk with their IV pole and tubing, please ask a nurse to show you and help.
- When in the playroom, please encourage your teen to keep his or her IV pole nearby and make sure the IV tubing and plug is a safe distance from them. Staff can help you with this.

Teens crave independence and choice; however, while in the hospital, it can seem that these have been taken away. Please communicate with staff when you will not be here and encourage your teen to ask questions and ask for help. Their safety is important. If your teen is having difficulties expressing himself or herself, please reach out to their nurse or a Child Life Specialist for suggestions.

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.