

What can I do?

The following twelve-point checklist can be used by patients and their carers and families.



Tell the nurse or doctor looking after you if you have fallen in the last year, are worried about falling, or have a history of falls.



Use your call bell if you need help to move, in particular, if you need help going to the toilet.



Make sure glasses are clean and used as prescribed. Ask for help if you are having trouble seeing.



Use your usual walking aid, keep it close by and check for wear and tear on the rubber feet. Never lean on hospital furniture as it's often on wheels.



When getting up:

- > sit upright for a few moments on the edge of your bed before standing
- > get up slowly and making sure you feel steady before walking.



Do some simple leg exercises before getting up from your bed or chair:

- > point your toes and release a few times
- > tighten the muscles in your calves and then release them
- > move your legs up and down if you can, to get the circulation going.



If you feel dizzy – stop, sit down, and let the ward staff know.



Drink regularly and eat well.



Be familiar with your bedside environment. Ask for clutter to be moved if your path isn't clear.



Make sure your shoes or slippers fit well, grip well and cannot fall off.



Take care in the bathroom and toilet. Ask for help if you need assistance.



It is also important to make sure that you receive a falls risk assessment – see 'What should hospitals be doing?' (p 12) for more information.