

# Preventing falls in the hospital

- Eat regularly and drink plenty of water
- Be aware of your new limitations and always ask for help if you need it. Don't be embarrassed or feel like you are a burden
- When sitting or lying down, get up slowly to avoid dizziness. Check with your pharmacist to see if your medications can cause dizziness or drowsiness
- Do not rush, take your time!
- Make sure your wheelchair brakes are locked before getting up
- Wear running shoes indoors and outdoors, not slippers
- Check with your physiotherapist to make sure you know how to correctly use your walking aids

## ASK

- Ask health care providers to explain medications and procedures to you
- Ask health care providers if they have washed their hands
- Ask health care providers to check your ID band before you receive any medications or procedures

## TALK

- Tell your health care provider what allergies you have
- Tell your health care provider what medications you are taking
- Tell your health care provider if you experience any side effects from your medication
- Tell your health care provider if you feel something is not right with your treatment

## LISTEN

- Listen to health care providers and have them clarify anything that you don't understand
- Involve family and friends in your care. Bring them with you to ask, listen and support

Falls are not a part of aging, most are preventable

- Use reachers and shoe horns and make sure your phone, call button, and other things you need often are within easy reach
- Remove reading glasses before walking
- Tell your health care provider about any falls you have had in the past
- Do not let the fear of falling prevent you from being active. Inactivity increases your risk of falls
- If you do fall, do not rush to get up - make sure you are not injured first
- Participate in Bridgepoint's Falls Prevention Program



**Staying Safe &**  
**Staying Well**  
at Bridgepoint Health

# SAFETY REQUIRES A TEAM APPROACH

Hospitals are places of recovery and healing but they can also be dangerous places. Unfortunate things such as falls, medication errors, and infections can happen despite our best efforts. Everyone involved in your care has an important role to play in ensuring your safety including YOU. Being involved in your own care can help decrease your risks of such events. Here are some ways you can become involved to help you and your family stay safe and stay well while at Bridgepoint Health.

**Knowledge  
is the Best  
Medicine**

## Communication is the key!

- Ask questions if you are unclear about something
- Talk with your health care provider or the Patient Relations representative if you have concerns about your care or safety
- You have the right to be well-informed, well-cared for and safe. You also have the right to ask for a second opinion
- Ask for assistance from our interpretation service if you are hearing impaired, or if English is not your first language
- Make sure your call button works, you know how to use it, and it is within easy reach at all times
- Speak up and ask health care providers questions. They will understand and appreciate your need to know
- When going home make sure you and your caregivers are clear about instructions (e.g. medications, follow-up visits, activity level and contact numbers)
- Have a list of questions prepared before you meet with your doctor so you don't forget anything
- When you visit your doctor, bring a family member or friend so you can both listen and ask questions

## Patient identification

All inpatients of Bridgepoint Health must wear an identification (ID) band at all times. This ID band contains information such as your name and date of birth, so that we can ensure we give the right care to the right person.

- Check your hospital ID band to make sure it is clear and your information is correct
- If you have an allergy, you should also wear a red allergy band that says what you are allergic to
- Make sure you have your ID band and allergy band on at all times. If either band comes off, ask for another one immediately
- Make sure all staff check your ID band before giving medications or any procedure or tests. Don't wait for them to ask to see it, show it to them!
- Find out what you should expect from any care or treatment you get. This way, you can question anything that seems unusual or different from what you were told



## Managing your medications

### TALK about:

- Your medication prescription, and over the counter medicines (pain meds, laxatives, cough syrup, vitamins, herbal, etc.)
- If you smoke or drink alcohol
- If you have any allergies to foods or medications
- If you are receiving treatment from other health care providers such as a Naturopath or Homeopath

### ASK your pharmacist, doctor or nurse:

- 1 What is the name of my medication?
- 2 Why do I need to take this medication?
- 3 When and how should I take it?
- 4 What does it look like (colour & shape)?
- 5 How long do I take this medication for?
- 6 What are its side effects?
- 7 Who do I talk to if I have a question?



### ALWAYS!

- Read the label every time you are about to use a medication – make sure it's the right one, for the right person, taken in the right way, at the right time
- Ask your pharmacist for a medication card or list and take it with you whenever you see your doctor or pharmacist

## 7 things YOU can do to prevent infection

- 1 Clean your hands often. This is the best way to prevent all infections. Use the alcohol hand rub on your bedside table or in the hallway. If your hands are visibly dirty, wash with warm water and soap for at least 15 seconds. Use a paper towel to turn off taps
- 2 **Make sure all your health care providers and family/visitors clean their hands well too!**
- 3 Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or cough into your sleeve. Always clean your hands afterwards
- 4 Ask your visitors not to visit if they are feeling ill
- 5 Tell your nurse or doctor if anything seems unusual like diarrhea, cold symptoms, pain or if there is something leaking from your operation site
- 6 Make sure your vaccinations are current and get your annual flu shot
- 7 Eat regularly, drink plenty of water and try to get enough rest to help build your body's immunity

**It's OK  
to ask  
people to  
wash their  
hands**

