

# Preventing falls in hospital

## Information for Patients and/or Caregiver

Welcome to the Paediatric Unit within the Southern Adelaide Local Health Network. This information sheet aims to answer any questions you may have about your child and falls.

### Falls

Falls can cause injuries to children. There are some things that can be done to reduce the risk of falls. This handout has tips to help your child remain safe and free from injury. Your nurse will assess your child's risk for falling. All children are at some risk for falling while in the hospital, but some are at greater risk than others.

### General Safety

- When your child needs help and you cannot help, please use, or have your child use, their call bell to alert the staff.
- Have your child ask for help before getting up if your child is not steady.
- Have them wear their glasses and hearing aids if needed.
- Have your child wear non-skid slippers.
- If your child has a walking aid, walker, crutches or a brace, be sure that your child is properly trained in its use and that he/she uses it.
- Please let the nurses know when you are leaving your child's room.
- Keep cot side rails up at their highest position if you are not with your child at the bedside. Always test cot side rail to make sure that it is latched securely.
- Be aware that certain medicines such as pain medicine, sedation, heart medicine, and medicines to increase urine output may make your child feel dizzy or unsteady.

### Room Safety

- Keep your child's call bell within reach and ask your child to use it when help is needed.
- Keep any needed items such as a phone, glasses, walking aids, or cups within reach.
- When your child gets out of bed, be sure the bed is at an appropriate height for your child.

- Watch for slippery spots or objects on the floor. Keep toys picked up off the floor.
- If it is a sunny day, close the blinds to reduce glare.
- Keep the room clear of extra chairs.
- Make sure your child's room is well lit.
- Do not let your child climb on the couch or stand on bed or chairs. We want to prevent your child from falling against the sharp corners and getting hurt.

### Bathroom Safety

- Tell your nurse about your child's bathroom habits. It is helpful to know when and how often your child goes to the bathroom so your nurse can help plan for any safety needs.
- Help your child to use the bathroom before it becomes urgent. If your child needs to go to the toilet often/urgently ask for a commode or urinal to be placed at your child's bedside.
- Have your child use the handrails on the bathroom wall to get on and off the toilet.
- Be careful as your child enters and exits the shower or tub. Your child should step over the short ledge and use the handrails to prevent falls.
- When getting out of the shower, watch for slippery spots on the floor. Place a towel on the floor to stand on when feet are wet.

### Safety beyond Your Room

Walking in the halls is good exercise. Please stay close to your child for support. Your child's nurse and physiotherapist will help you decide if the child's walks can be done alone or with the help of family or staff. Be sure your child wears slippers and glasses and uses a walking aid if needed.

Your child's safety is important to us. Please let us know if your child has any special needs and how we can help prevent falls.

## For more information

Flinders Womens and Childrens  
Flinders Medical Centre  
Bedford Park SA 5042  
Telephone: 08 8204 5511  
[www.sahealth.sa.gov.au](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au)



This document has been reviewed and endorsed by consumers.