

Suggestions to Avoid Falling in a Hospital:

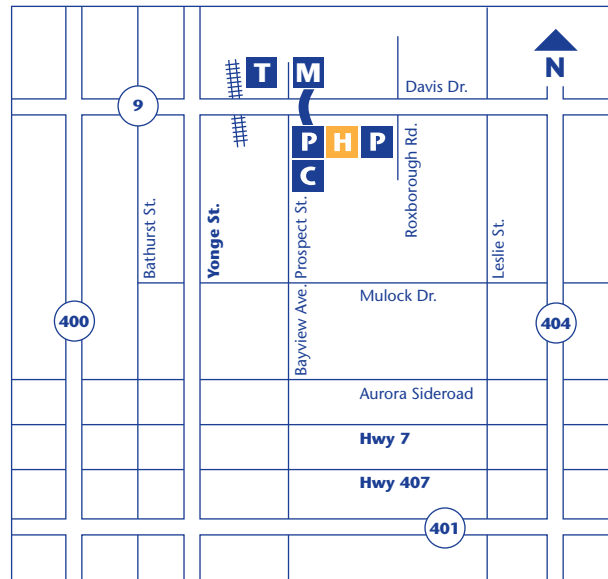
- Wear firm, flat, closed-heel, non-skid footwear while walking.
- Put footwear on before standing.
- Wear clothing that fits well and is comfortable. Do not wear clothing that drags on the floor.
- Ask for help if you feel weak, dizzy, or are lightheaded when getting up.
- Change position slowly to allow your body time to adjust – count to 10 slowly.
- Use the call bell in the bathroom if you become weak or need help to get back to bed.
- Let the staff know if a spill occurs on the floor.
- Ask to have items such as bedside tables, phone, and call bell within easy reach if it is difficult for you to get up.
- Make sure that recommended walking aids are within reach.


Use safe transfer techniques as instructed by the healthcare team:

- Ensure that the brakes are applied on the wheelchair and bed when getting up or down from bed and/or a wheelchair.
- Use both hands to support yourself when getting on and off a bed, chair, or toilet.
- Back into a chair to sit down. Don't sit until the back of your legs touch the seat of the chair.
- Hold on to stable objects when transferring to bed, chair, walker, etc.
- Avoid obstacles – try to choose a clear path in which to walk.
- Use a night light, or leave the bathroom light on at night.

If you have any questions or concerns about falls, do not hesitate to ask a member of the Healthcare team.

How to find us:



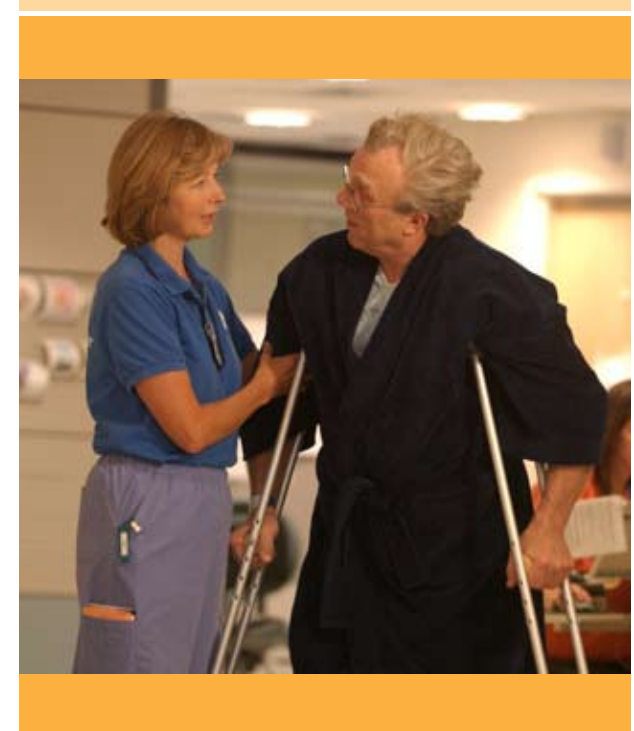
- H** Southlake Regional Health Centre
- C** Stronach Regional Cancer Centre
- T** The Tannery Mall, 465 Davis Drive
- M** Medical Arts Building, 581 Davis Drive
- P** Parking
-  Bridge crossing Davis Drive. Accessible from P3 of the Parking Garage and Level 3 of the Medical Arts Building.

For more information, please contact:

Southlake Regional Health Centre
596 Davis Drive
Newmarket, Ontario L3Y 2P9
Tel: 905-895-4521
Fax: 905-830-5977
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www.southlakeregional.org

Reducing the Risk of Falls

A Guide to Safe Practices to Avoid Falling



Suggestions to Avoid Falling at Home

Keep things close that are easy to use:

- Use a cordless telephone, if possible.
- Place frequently-used items in easy-to-reach places.

Proper lighting:

- Install proper lighting throughout your home, particularly around stairs and washrooms.
- Install night lights in hallways, bedrooms, and bathrooms.

Clutter:

- Keep your floors and stairs free of clutter.
- Avoid throw mats or scatter rugs.

Climbing the stairs:

- Use at least one handrail on all stairs.
- Mark the edge of stair treads with contrasting colours to make them easier to see.

Navigating Your Home:

- Use stable, sturdy footwear inside and outside the home.
- Be aware of pets getting in your way.
- Avoid rushing to answer the phone or doorbell, or get to the bathroom.

Maintain Your Health:

- Exercise regularly to maintain muscle strength and flexibility.
- Have your hearing and eyesight tested regularly.
- When getting out of bed, wait a few minutes before standing.

Medications:

- Review your medications with your doctor or pharmacist – some over-the-counter medications can cause drowsiness and dizziness.
- Consult your doctor before taking new medications or herbal remedies.
- Avoid combining alcohol with medications as this may increase your risk for falling.
- Avoid excessive alcohol intake.

In the Bathroom:

- Keep bathroom doors unlocked, so help can enter if needed.
- Install grab bars by the toilet and in the bathtub or shower. Do not use towel racks for support.
- If extra support is needed in the bathroom, consider a bath bench, or bath seat for the bath tub/shower, and a raised toilet seat.
- Use a hand-held shower in the bathtub or shower stall to avoid sudden twisting, turning, or bending movements.
- Use no-slip mats on the floor and bath mats with suction cups in the shower/bath tub.
- Be aware of water spills that may be slippery.
- Avoid very hot bathing temperatures that can cause dizziness.

In case of Emergency:

- Install a personal response unit. Using the response unit appropriately will enable you to contact help immediately if you should need it.

Suggestions to Avoid Falling Outside Your Home

When coming in from the cold and/or wet exterior:

- Dry off canes, crutches, and walkers upon entering your home.
- Ice picks and tips are available to use on walking aids during the winter.
- Sit down when removing shoes/boots.
- Avoid going outdoors during bad weather.
- Keep walkways and stairs free of snow, ice, and clutter.
- Ensure stairs are well lit.
- Ensure stairs are equipped with at least one handrail.

Personal Notes:
