

**Do you have a family member who:**

- has fallen recently,
- has an unsteady gait,
- is disoriented/confused,
- has elimination problems:
  - incontinent;
  - urgency/frequency;
  - getting up at night;
- has diagnosis of psychosis or dementia,
- is taking sedatives,
- is taking antipsychotic medication,
- has impaired judgement/lack of safety awareness or
- is agitated?

Let the staff know if any of these apply to you or your family member.

**Our mission**

Our mission is to provide, in a community-based setting, the highest quality healthcare to Boston's northern suburbs.

**Our vision**

Hallmark Health will be the system of choice in our region, with demonstrated service to and support from area residents and physicians.

**Visit us on-line at [www.hallmarkhealth.org](http://www.hallmarkhealth.org)**



**H Hallmark Health**

Melrose-Wakefield Hospital      Lawrence Memorial Hospital

**[www.hallmarkhealth.org](http://www.hallmarkhealth.org)**



The Official Healthcare Partner  
of the Boston Bruins®

Lawrence Memorial Hospital of Medford | Melrose-Wakefield Hospital (Melrose)  
Hallmark Health Cancer Center (Stoneham) | The CHEM Center for MRI (Stoneham)  
The CHEM Center for Radiation Oncology (Stoneham)  
Hallmark Health Medical Center (Reading) | Hallmark Health VNA and Hospice  
Lawrence Memorial/Regis College Nursing and Radiography Programs (Medford)  
Hallmark Health Medical Associates, Inc.

# Preventing Falls



This information is provided to you from the Falls Task Force. We are committed to improving patient safety at Hallmark Health and the Falls Task Force has developed some strategies for patients and caregivers to use to reduce falls, which may be useful here and also at home.

**H Hallmark Health**

Melrose-Wakefield Hospital      Lawrence Memorial Hospital

**[www.hallmarkhealth.org](http://www.hallmarkhealth.org)**

We are working to reduce falls at Hallmark Health. You can help too by asking for help for yourself or a family member.

You might be a little weaker since you have been admitted to the hospital or feel unfamiliar with your surroundings so we have prepared some suggestions and tips on how to keep you from falling.

Make sure you have everything you need within reach — the call light, your telephone, your eye glasses, walker, cane, tissues any food or drink that you may want. Wearing glasses and hearing aides regularly helps to reduce falls.

Do not get out of bed on your own until cleared by your nurse or therapist. If you are at higher risk for falls, a staff member should be with you for all the time you need when you are at the bathroom.

Use the call light for assistance.

Always move from one position to another (lying to sitting or sitting to standing) slowly so that your body can adjust.

Ask the nursing staff to leave up the top two side rails to help you to move around a little easier.

Always wear nonskid/rubber-soled footwear when getting out of bed. You might want to wear non-skid slipper socks all the time, just in case you need to get out of bed in a hurry.

Since the hospital is an unfamiliar place, you might want to have a night-light kept on all night.

Staff will check to see if the brakes are on hospital equipment, stretchers, beds and chairs.

If you have any questions or suggestions feel free to discuss them with the nursing or rehabilitation staff.

## Tips for your home:

### Kitchen:

- Slide items that are too heavy along counters to prevent loss of balance.
- When opening a cabinet or oven, open from the side and hold onto the counter for increased stability.
- Place the items used most often within reach.

### Living room:

- Try sitting in firmer chairs with arms.
- Make sure lamp cords and telephone cords are behind furniture or taped to the floor.
- Avoid low-soft couches when possible.

### Bedroom:

- Have phone and lamp near the bed in case of emergency.
- Have night light on for getting up to go to the bathroom.

### Bathroom:

- Use non-skid mats on floor and tub.
- Have grab bars installed next to the toilet and in the tub.
- Use a raised toilet seat with arms to make standing easier.
- Use a tub seat to prevent falls in tub.

### Other:

- Remove scatter rugs/or tape them down to prevent falls.
- Clearly mark thresholds especially when using a walker or cane.
- Place emergency phone numbers where they can be easily obtained.
- Make sure light switches are within easy/safe reach.
- Do **NOT** pull on walker to stand from a chair or bed. When used like this, they are unstable. Push from the arms of a chair.

