

Preventing Patient Falls in the Emergency Department (ED)

At Michigan Medicine our goal is to make your hospital stay as safe as possible. To decrease your chance of having a fall and getting injured while you are in the ED, we placed a yellow fall precaution sign outside your room.

What is the fall prevention sign?

The yellow sign outside your door shows that you have a higher risk for falling in the ED. This sign helps communication and partnership between yourself and the healthcare team to prevent a fall. It serves as a reminder to keep you safe.

What are “fall risk factors”?

Fall risk factors are things that can make you more likely to fall while in the hospital and ED:

- **Being in the ED**

The hospital is an unfamiliar environment with different furniture and equipment to move around. Because you are sick and because of the different environment, you are at higher risk for falling in the ED.

- **History of fall**

This means that you have fallen within the last 6 months. Having a fall may even be the reason for your ED visit today.

- **Balance/Gait**

You may be unsteady on your feet or unable to hold yourself upright for very long due to an illness, weakness, or medications. You might also need a walker or cane to move around.

- **Elimination**

You may have to use the bathroom frequently or urgently due to an illness or medications you are taking.

- **Cognition**

You may be confused or forgetful as a result of illness, a procedure, or medications you are taking.

- **Sensory**

You may be hard of hearing or wear glasses. You might be light-headed or dizzy or you may have numbness or tingling in your hands or feet.

What medications can increase my risk of falling?

Common medications include:

- Blood Pressure Medications
- Diuretics (such as Lasix®)
- Antihistamines (such as Benedryl®)
- Sleep Aids
- Antidepressants
- Anti-seizure Medications
- Steroids
- Pain Medications
- Anti-Nausea Medications
- Chemotherapy
- Other Central Nervous System drugs (such as: Neurontin®, Lyrica®)

Can my fall risk factors change?

Yes. While you are in the ED your fall risk factors may change. Your nurse will update the fall prevention sign when there is a change.

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