

Appendix A

Baby and Mother Safety in the Hospital

Preventing falls

Am I at risk for falls even if I am strong and healthy?

YES, you are at risk for falls! Many things can increase this risk while you are in the hospital, in labor, and giving birth. You may:

- Be very tired from lack of sleep
- Be in pain
- Receive strong pain medicines (*opioids*) that can make you sleepy and affect your motor skills
- Feel dizzy when you stand up
- Need to get to the bathroom quickly
- Feel weak
- Have swollen legs
- Have medical equipment that can get tangled
- Have low blood pressure from blood loss during birth or surgery

What do I need to do?

- **Use the call light when you want to get out of bed.** Do not get out of bed on your own. When you no longer need to call for help, we will change the sign above your bed to “Ambulates Independently.”
- **Work with us to create your fall prevention plan.** We want to keep you safe! As part of this plan, we may:
 - Assess your mobility by checking how well you can rotate your ankles, raise your legs, and flex your hips.
 - Use a *gait belt* around your chest or abdomen to help keep you steady when you walk.



We may use a gait belt to help keep you steady while you walk.

- Help you to the bathroom every 2 to 3 hours. We will stay with you while you use the bathroom to make sure you are safe.

How can I help keep my baby safe from falls?

Your baby is at very high risk for falling during the first few days of life. Here are the most common reasons babies fall, and how to prevent falls from happening:

Risk	How to Prevent Falls
<p>Parent falls asleep while holding baby.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are tired after a long labor. • Mom has been given a medicine that changes her ability to know how tired she is. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not fall asleep with your baby in your bed. Your baby should always sleep in a bassinet. • Always keep the top side rail up. This is extra important when you are holding your baby in bed.
<p>Mom feels faint and may trip or fall while carrying her baby.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluid changes in mother's body can make her dizzy. • If mother had an epidural or spinal analgesic, it can take a while to regain full power and feeling in her legs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask your nurse or your partner to move your baby to the crib for you. • Get out of bed carefully. • When you can get up and return your baby to the bassinet by yourself: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Place your baby safely on the center of the bed, then get up. Do this slowly for 2 to 3 days to keep from getting dizzy. - When you are sure you are stable on your feet, pick up your baby and walk carefully to the bassinet.
<p>Parent trips while carrying the baby.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring the bassinet close to your bed so that you do not have to carry your baby very far. • Keep the bassinet on the side of your bed nearest the door (next to the oxygen and suction machines). • Keep the floor clear around your bed. Leave a clear walkway from your bed to the door. • Take extra items home or ask Security to keep them for you. Make sure they do not clutter the floor. • Always wheel your baby in the bassinet when you leave your room. Do not carry your baby in the hall.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Let us know if you have questions or concerns.

Mother Baby Unit/
5-South: 206.598.5600