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Our goal at Children's is to give your child the safest possible care. Falls cause more injuries in children younger than 15 years old than any other cause.

While at Children's, your child may be placed on a program called "Fall Prevention." We want to help keep your child safe and prevent them from falling. If a child falls during a visit to Children's, it can:

- Cause a longer hospital stay.
- Increase the cost of your child's treatment.
- Cause your child pain and suffering that could have been avoided.

## What is the fall prevention program?

Being part of the fall prevention program means your child is at higher risk of falling during or after a hospital stay. You may notice a yellow armband on your child and a yellow sign on the door of your child's room. They let staff members know your child is at risk for falling.

## Why is my child on the fall prevention program?

Your child may be placed on fall prevention for 1 or more of these reasons:

- Has fallen before (history of falls)
- Limps or needs help walking
- Has poor balance
- Has diarrhea (loose stools) or needs to go to the bathroom often
- Is developmentally delayed
- Takes medicines that cause them to feel dizzy, weak, confused or sleepy
- Is disoriented or confused because of their sickness
- Has recently had surgery
- Needs a device to help them get around, such as a wheelchair, walker, cane or leg braces

## How can I help prevent my child from falls?

At Children's, we enjoy working with parents and caregivers to help prevent falls from happening. We invite you to be our partner in safety. Some ways you can help are listed on page 2.

**In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.**

# Fall prevention program, continued

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If your child is in a crib:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Keep the crib rails in the highest position and locked in place when in use.</li> <li>– Make sure you hear a click to make sure the rails are locked in place.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If your child is in a bed:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Keep the bed rails in the highest position and locked in place when in use.</li> <li>– Make sure you hear a click to make sure the rails are in place.</li> <li>– Keep the bed itself close to the ground in the lowest position.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lock the wheels of the crib or bed in place.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep port holes to incubators closed and locked.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If your child will be alone:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Keep the phone and call light within reach.</li> <li>– Tell your child to use the call light to get help to the bathroom when alone.</li> <li>– Keep your child’s door open, and tell the nurse when you are leaving.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use bedside toilets as advised to help prevent falls on the way to the bathroom.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place non-skid socks, shoes or slippers on your child’s feet before walking.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help your child to walk.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep wires and tubes out of your child’s path and walkway.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell your child to use the grab bars in the bathroom.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not let your child climb on furniture or I.V. poles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep the floor clear of toys, trash, clothes and shoes.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put your child in their crib or bed with the rails up when they get sleepy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep a nightlight on in the room.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If your child needs to wear a helmet, make sure they have it on as the doctor directs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use safety belts on all baby swings, bouncy seats and highchairs.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay with your child at all times during outpatient and clinic visits.</li> </ul>	

## What happens if my child falls?

Try to stay calm if your child falls. **Press the call light or call your nurse right away.** This helps to make sure your child gets attention and help quickly.

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# Fall prevention program, continued

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## Is my child at risk for falls at home?

Yes, there are many things at home that can cause a child to fall. Some ways you can help prevent falls are listed below.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lock windows and doors as needed.</li><li>• Install window guards.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Open double-hung windows from the top only.</li><li>• Place a safety bar on windows above ground level that can be easily removed in case of fire.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do not place furniture near windows.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plant bushes around tall buildings to soften the surface in case of falls.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Install railings on roofs, fire escapes and balconies.</li><li>• Make sure they are no more than 4 inches apart.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Install gates at the top and bottom of stairs if you have a baby or young toddler who is starting to crawl or walk.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use seat belts on all baby equipment.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Keep stairs clean and uncluttered.</li><li>• Install a handrail if you do not already have one. Teach your child to use it to go up and down stairs.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Place baby seats on the floor.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lower the mattress in the crib when your child starts to pull up to stand.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Install slip resistant stickers on the bathtub floor.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Install surface materials in playgrounds to soften the surface.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lower the height of playground equipment.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teach your child to wear helmets and knee and elbow pads when biking, skating and riding ATVs.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When shopping, always place your child in a child seat with the safety belt latched.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Never leave babies alone on any furniture.</li></ul>

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# Fall prevention program, continued

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## Where can I learn more?

The fall prevention program at Children's is an important way to help keep your child safe in the hospital.

You may visit these websites to learn more about keeping your child safe after you go home:

- Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Strong4Life, Staying Safe – [strong4life.com/en/staying-safe](https://strong4life.com/en/staying-safe)
- The American Academy of Pediatrics – [patiented.aap.org](https://patiented.aap.org)
- Safe Kids of Georgia – [safekidsgeorgia.org](https://safekidsgeorgia.org)

*Children's Healthcare of Atlanta has not reviewed all of the sites listed as resources and does not make any representations regarding their content or accuracy. Children's Healthcare of Atlanta does not recommend or endorse any particular products, services or the content or use of any third party websites, or make any determination that such products, services or websites are necessary or appropriate for you or for the use in rendering care to patients. Children's Healthcare of Atlanta is not responsible for the content of any of the above-referenced sites or any sites linked to these Sites. Use of the services referenced and/or links provided in this teaching sheet is at your sole risk.*

**This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.**

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