

If you do have a fall or an infection of any kind within 28 days of your surgery please ring the hospital on (03) 6334 4960 to let them know.

This Fact sheet has been adapted from Preventing Falls and Harm From Falls in Older People: Best Practice Guidelines for Australian Hospitals 2009– Australian Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Infection in Healthcare 2010. Developed by the Australian Commission on safety and Quality in Healthcare

**Preventing Falls &
Post Surgery Infections**

Patient & Carer Information

Preventing Falls

There are usually a number of reasons for someone falling. These may include poor eyesight, eye surgery, poor balance, incontinence, unfamiliar environments and obstacles, unsafe footwear, and some medicines.

What can you do when you are in hospital?

- Take your time when getting up from sitting or lying down;
- Let staff know if you are feeling unwell or unsteady on your feet;
- Look out for hazards that may cause a fall, such as spills, clutter and tell staff about them promptly;
- If you have your prescribed walking aid, make sure it is in good condition and use it rather than using furniture or walls for balance;
- Wear comfortable clothing that is not too long or loose. Whenever you are up and about wear comfortable, low-heeled and nonslip shoes that fit you well rather than slippers.

There are a number of ways to reduce your chance of falling.

Our staff will assist you to prevent falling by:

- Keeping your surroundings safe;
- Provide you with falls prevention information .

What can you do before being admitted?

- Bring to hospital any equipment you would normally use, such as spectacles and walking aids.

What can you do when you go home?

With one eye covered your depth perception will be altered so you will need to be careful and aware of:

- Going up and down stairs and uneven surfaces;
- Drinking hot fluids.

Take Extra Precautions at Home

- Turn on the lights when you enter a room. Do not walk in the dark;
- Make sure your walkways are clear;
- Use the hand rails on staircases;
- Sit in chairs that do not move and have arm rests to assist you when you sit down or stand up;
- Replace rubber tips on canes and walkers when they have become worn;
- You will need to look out for hazards that may cause a fall, such as spills, clutter and open cupboard doors mats, etc;
- You should wear comfortable clothing that is not too long or loose;
- Use your prescribed walking aid.

Preventing Post Operative Infections

What is a Surgical Site Infection (SSI)?

A surgical site infection is an infection that occurs after surgery in part of the body where the surgery took place. Most patients who have surgery do not develop an infection. However, infections develop in about 1-3 out of every 100 patients who have surgery.

Can SSI's be treated?

Yes. Most surgical site infections can be treated with anti-biotics. Sometimes patients with SSI's may need further surgery to treat the infection.

What are the common symptoms of SSI?

Some of the common symptoms of a surgical site infection are:

- Redness and pain around the area where you had surgery;
- Drainage of cloudy fluid from your surgical wound;
- Fever.

What can I do to help prevent SSI's?

Before Your Surgery:

- Tell your doctor about other medical problems you may have. Allergies, diabetes and obesity could affect your surgery and your treatment.
- Quit smoking. Patients who smoke have more chance of getting an infection. Talk to your doctor about how you can quit before your surgery.

After Your Surgery:

- Before you leave the day surgery centre, your doctor or nurse should explain everything you need to know about taking care of your wound. Please make sure you understand these instructions before you leave the hospital.
- Always clean your hands before and after caring for your wound and before and after inserting drops or ointment.
- Before you go home, make sure you know who to contact if you have any questions or problems once you are home.
- If you have any symptoms of an infection such as redness and pain at the surgery site, drainage, fever or chills call your doctor immediately.